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ARTICLE

***THE END OF THE LINE: SUPERMAX PRISONS* QUESTIONS**

In the movie Silence of the Lambs, Hanibal Lechter was held in a “supermax” facility. Read the article *THE END OF THE LINE: SUPERMAX PRISONS* and consider if Hanibal Lechter was in a facility like the ones described and also if it is possible to escape from a supermax prison.

**DIRECTIONS:** Use information from the article to answer the following questions. You will need to write the answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What happened on Easter Sunday 1993 in a Lucasville, OH prison?
2. How much did the event cost the taxpayers?
3. What types of changes over the next 5 years did this event bring about?
4. What is a ***supermax*** prison?
5. Do people support or condemn these prisons? Why do you think they feel this way?
6. How do inmates end up at supermax prisons?
7. Using the chart in the article what are the top 5 reasons inmates end up in a supermax prison?
8. What is the main purpose of a supermax prison?
9. What are the typical conditions of prisoners confined to a supermax institution?
10. How many hours do prisoners in a supermax facility spend isolated in their cell each day?
11. What is seen as the key to modern prison management?
12. According to the chart in the article what types of misbehavior fall under the category of “other?”
13. Do you believe isolating prisoners to the extent they do in supermax prisons is cruel and unusual punishment? Defend your answer.
14. What types of inmates are likely to be placed in supermax facilities?
15. How do administrators of supermax prisons use these facilities as a disciplinary tool?
16. Before modern supermax prisons what prison was considered the most secure of all prisons in the US? What made this prison so secure? Why did they finally close it?
17. What is the dispersion model for placing prisoners?
18. By the late 1970’s what was discovered about this method of placing prisoners?
19. What happened in a prison in Marion, IL in 1983?
20. What is a lockdown?
21. What did prison officials do in the Marion prison in regards to the lockdown that helped to make it the earliest supermax prison?
22. What is a “consolidation model” prison?
23. What is the focus and goal of a consolidated model supermax prison?
24. What has changed about where supermax facilities are being built?
25. What is the design of the CMAX in Tamms, IL?
26. Why does the design of new supermax prisons strive to limit the contact between prisoners and guards? How do they accomplish this?
27. Why do prison officials support the increase in the number of supermax prisons?
28. What are the criticisms of these prisons?
29. What did the Supreme Court case *Sandin v. Conner* (1995) determine about the transfer of prisoners to supermax facilities?
30. What particular amendment do opponents believe is violated by the conditions of supermax prisons?
31. What did a Harvard psychologist discover after studying inmates at California’s Pelican Bay Prison?
32. What is “SHU syndrome?”
33. What did US District Judge Thelton Henderson state in the case *Madrid v. Gomez* (1995)?
34. What did Judge Henderson’s ruling force supermax prisons to do?
35. Approximately how many inmates do supermax prisons hold?
36. ***FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:*** Do you believe supermax prisons are an acceptable way to contain prisons or do you believe they constitute cruel and unusual punishment? Justify your answer with evidence from the article.
37. ***FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:*** Do you believe the supermax facilities of today are similar to what you saw in the movie The Silence of the Lambs? Explain.
38. ***FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:*** Do you believe it is possible/likely that a prisoner can escape from a supermax prison? Why or why not?