SOURCE A

This is an extract from a letter Oscar Wilde wrote to The Daily Chronicle newspaper after his own release in 1897 from Reading prison. The letter, entitled ‘The Case of Warder Martin: Some Cruelties of Prison Life’, shows his concern over the treatment of children in prisons.

To The Editor, The Daily Chronicle, Friday 28th May 1897.

Dear Sir … the present treatment of children is terrible, primarily from people not understanding the peculiar psychology of a child’s nature. A child cannot understand a punishment inflicted by society …

The child consequently, being taken away from its parents by people whom it has never seen, and of whom it knows nothing, and finding itself in a lonely and unfamiliar cell, waited on by strange faces, and ordered about and punished by representatives of a prison system that it cannot understand, becomes an immediate prey to the first and most prominent emotion produced by modern prison – the emotion of terror.

The terror of a child in prison is quite limitless. I remember once, in Reading, as I was going out to exercise, seeing in the dimly-lit cell right opposite my own, a small boy.

Two warders – not unkindly men – were talking to him with some sternness apparently, or perhaps giving him some useful advice about his conduct. One was in the cell with him, the other was standing outside. The child’s face was like a white wedge of sheer terror. There was in his eyes the terror of a hunted animal.

The next morning I heard him at breakfast time crying and calling to be let out. His cry was for his parents. From time to time I could hear the deep voice of the warder on duty telling him to keep quiet. Yet he was not even convicted of whatever little offence he had been charged with. He was simply on remand. This I knew by his wearing of his own clothes, which seemed neat enough. He was, however, wearing prison socks and shoes.

This showed that he was a very poor boy, whose own shoes, if he had any, were in a bad state. Justices and magistrates, an entirely ignorant class as a rule, often remand children for a week … They call this “not sending a child to prison”. It is, of course, a stupid view on their part. To a little child whether he is in prison on remand, or after conviction, is not a subtlety of social position he can comprehend. To him the horrible thing is to be there at all. In the eyes of humanity it should be a horrible thing for him to be there at all.
SOURCE B: The Guardian newspaper article, Monday 13\textsuperscript{th} September, 1999

Land where killers are free to go hunting

Read the following article that appeared in the Guardian newspaper, in 1999: www.theguardian.com/world/1999/sep/13/4

Q1: Refer to source A. Choose four statements below which are true.

- Wilde believes that prison is a good punishment for children. 
- Wilde claims that prison is a terrifying experience for children.
- Wilde witnessed a child begging to be released from prison.
- Wilde believes sending children to prison is a stupid idea.
- The boy had lost his own shoes and socks.
- The boy was so poor he did not have his own shoes and socks.
- The boy cried because he missed his friends.

Q2. You need to refer to source A and source B for this question.

Use details from both sources. Write a summary of the differences between the treatment of the children in prison in source A and the treatment of the convicts at the Nuuk correctional institution in source B.

Q3: Refer to source B.

How does the writer use language to convey a sense of scepticism about Greenland’s treatment of criminals?

Q4: Refer to source A and source B.

Write a summary of the differences between the two writers’ attitudes to prison as a form of punishment.

In your answer you should:
- compare the writers’ attitudes
- compare the methods they use to convey their attitudes
- support your ideas with quotations from both texts.