WRITING A SUMMARY - PART II (PRACTICE)

**TIPS:**

* read the task carefully
* read the texts carefully keeping the task in mind
* detach yourself from the texts trying to put things differently (using synonyms is not necessarily synonymous with rephrasing)
* include nothing but the required arguments
* use transitions (preferably the more sophisticated ones: furthermore, moreover, additionally, what’s more, more/most importantly, last but not least…)
* try to identify related arguments to strengthen your organization
* do not extend your introduction beyond one sentence
* avoid repetitive vocabulary / structures
* make sure you observe the word-limit
* avoid too extensive way of expression
* avoid quotations and rhetorical questions

**TASK:** In a paragraph between 90-110 words, summarise, in your own words as far as possible, the arguments given in the texts below for not allowing young children to stay with their mothers in prison.

TEXT 1

It may be a question that has never crossed your mind, and hopefully one that you will never even have to contemplate, but should children ever be kept in prison, even if their mother is incarcerated there? Last week, a mother scored a victory in the courts when the prison service was ordered to review its decision over whether she should be allowed to keep her daughter, who is nearly two, with her. Children in the mother and baby unit at a prison near York are usually allowed live inside only until the age of 18 months. The mother's motives, and her presumable delight at what has undoubtedly been an unprecedented legal decision, are understandable, but are they justified?

Chris Tchaikovsky of the campaigning prison reform group, Women in Prison, believes it can never be right to keep children in jail. She says she can't think of an easier way to destroy a child, and asks: 'Why aren't the mothers tagged? They could then stay with their children in a healthy environment.' Alternative punishments of this kind are beginning to gain ground, but it remains to be seen what the attitude of the general public might be to this solution to an ever-rising crime rate.

The prison service argues that around the age of 14 months, babies start to become aware of their institutionalized surroundings, and that jealousies can develop among other inmates who sometimes believe that prisoners in mother and baby units are accorded special privileges. There have also been incidents of children learning and using prison jargon.

Parenting campaigner Sheila Kitzinger described the potentially traumatic effect on a child of a break in attachment to his or her primary carer. ‘For any young child, the basis of love and trust is a close and continuing attachment with not more than two or three loving adults who are completely committed to that child.’

TEXT 2

The prison service must relax its policy of not allowing women to keep their babies with them in jail beyond the age of 18 months, the Court of Appeal ruled yesterday.

The ruling opens the floodgates for prisoners to make a case to keep their children with them until the age of three or four.

Two mothers convicted of drug offences, both with girls aged two, brought test cases arguing that separating them from their children breached their right to family under the European Convention on Human Rights. The High Court ruled last May that the prison service was entitled to operate its current policy. But yesterday, Lord Phillips allowed the appeal of one mother known only as Q. The judges ordered the service to reconsider her case. The Home Office and the prison service were lawfully entitles to have a policy, the judges said, but to adopt what can only be described as a stringent and rigid stance, despite the possibly catastrophic consequences of separation, defeated the policy’s aim of promoting the welfare of the child.

Mr Justice Lightman warned last May, however, that the increasing numbers of mothers of young children who were becoming involved in the drugs trade could not expect too lenient treatment because it would send out the wrong message.

The solicitor for Q and her daughter said of the Appeal Court judgement: «The rights of children within the prison system have largely been invisible. This judgement redresses that.»