

# Prison Tattoos



## Learning objectives

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Talk about your opinion of tattoos.
- Use vocabulary related to crime.
- Talk about ex-gang members re-entering society.

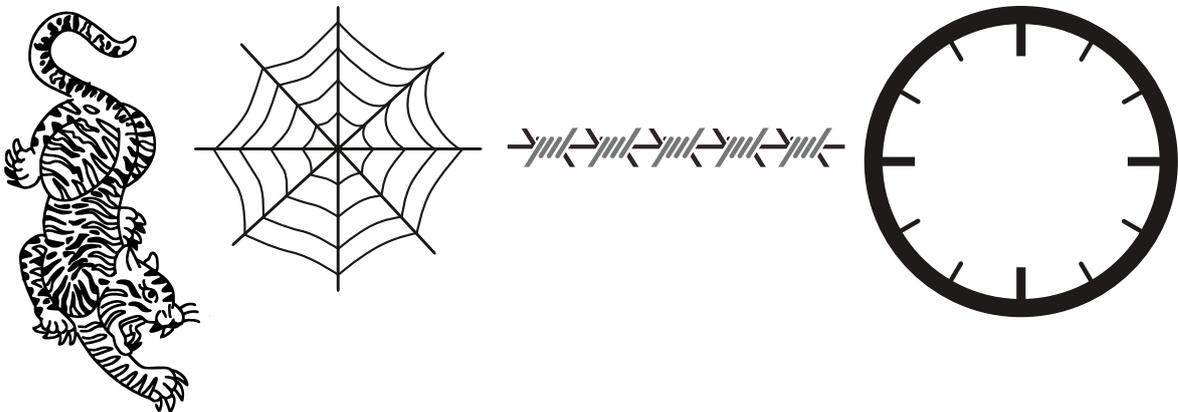
## Discuss

Ask students to enter into a discussion about tattoos, students should be encouraged to continue the conversation with follow up questions and support their ideas with examples.

- How do you feel about tattoos?
- When you see somebody with a lot of tattoos what do you think?
- Do you have any tattoos? If so, what do they mean?

Look at the tattoos designs, what do they mean?

There are 4 different tattoos, a tiger, a spiderweb, barbwire and a clock with no hands. Students are encouraged to guess what these tattoos mean or what they represent to them. Students can then look at the supposed meanings and try to match them to the image. These definitions are just some definitions given to tattoos in jail, so student's should be allowed to express their own ideas.



- A life sentence without parole. Each of the barbs can also symbolize the number of years spent in prison.
- Power and strength.
- A lengthy sentence, or a sentence of life without parole.
- Time spent in prison or time spent in the inescapable gang lifestyle.

- A life sentence without parole. Each of the barbs can also symbolize the number of years spent in prison. - Barbwire
- Power and strength. - Tiger
- A lengthy sentence, or a sentence of life without parole. - Clock with no hands
- Time spent in prison or time spent in the inescapable gang lifestyle. - Spiderweb

Do you agree or disagree with these meanings? Why or why not?

Do these tattoos have any other meanings?

Encourage students to extend the conversation and talk about different tattoos with different meanings, also motivate students to reflect on the significance of a tattoo and whether tattoos need to have a meaning or not.

Match the words to their definitions

These words are from the video, so it is important to check comprehension of these words, you can ask comprehension questions and elicit examples from the students.

- incarcerate
- re-enter
- stigma
- straddle the fence
- bring back memories
- to not commit to a decision
- imprison or confine
- enter (something) again
- a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person
- To remind you of something from the past

To not commit to a decision – straddle

Imprison or confine – incarcerate

Enter (something) again – re-enter

A mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person – stigma

To remind you of something from the past – bring back memories

Complete the questions with these vocabulary words

re-enter / straddle the fence / stigma

Is there still a certain \_\_\_\_ towards people who have tattoos?

What advice do you have for ex-gang members looking to \_\_\_\_ society?

Why do some ex-gang members \_\_\_\_\_ about removing their gang tattoos?

Is there still a certain **stigma** towards people who have tattoos?

What advice do you have for ex-gang members looking to **re-enter** society?

Why do some ex-gang members **straddle the fence** about removing their gang tattoos?

Watch the video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rT9jcDrFGxs>, and answer the questions.

Students need to watch the video and take notes, this video has strong language and may not be suitable for all audiences.

- How many people do they help a year?
  - Over 12,000
- What does Homeboy Industries do?
  - Remove gang tattoos
- How many different gangs and clicks go through Homeboy Industries?
  - Over 1,200
- How many friends has Gabriel lost to gangs?
  - Over 12 (over a dozen)

#### Discuss

After watching the video, ask students to reflect on the video and Homeboy Industries and what initiatives and help there are in their towns, cities, and countries.

- What do you think about this initiative?
- How else can help ex-gang members re-enter society?

#### Debate

Divide students into groups to discuss tattoos, make sure each group knows what side of the argument they are on, students can use their own ideas or talk about cultural links to tattoos, criminal links to tattoos, stigmatism, and how society is evolving.

**Tattoos are offensive!** To what extend do you agree or disagree?