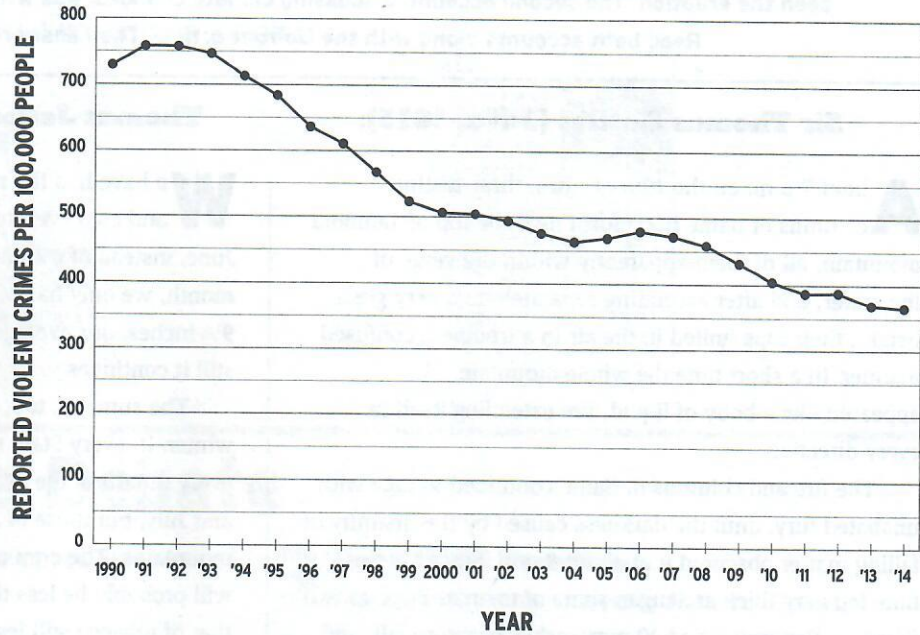


Safer Streets

One of the reasons given by opponents of mandatory minimum sentencing is that the nation's violent crime rate has dropped sharply. Violent crimes are those that involve force or the threat of force, including murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. To some people, low rates of such crimes are a signal that America's incarceration rate is unnecessarily high. To others, the drop in violence suggests that the nation's high incarceration rate is helping prevent crime.

The line graph below shows how the U.S. violent crime rate has changed since 1990.



SOURCE: FBI

ANALYZE THE GRAPH

- In 1999, about ___ violent crimes were reported for every 100,000 people in the U.S.
 - 505
 - 525
 - 550
 - 580
- Which following pair of years had approximately the same rate of violent crime?
 - 1991 and 1994
 - 1995 and 1996
 - 2000 and 2001
 - 2008 and 2012
- Violent crime rates ___ during the period from 2004 to 2009.
 - rose sharply
 - fell sharply
 - changed little
 - fell sharply, then rose
- Which of these three-year periods saw the largest drop in America's violent crime rate?
 - 1993 to 1996
 - 1999 to 2002
 - 2004 to 2007
 - 2009 to 2012
- The 2014 U.S. population was about 320 million. You can use the graph to calculate that there were ___ violent crime reports that year.
 - about 365,000
 - about 720,000
 - about 1.2 million
 - about 3.6 million

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think reports of violent crime in the United States have been dropping?
- Do you predict that the decline in violent crime will continue in the decades to come? Why or why not?
- Nearly 1 in every 100 adult Americans is behind bars, which is the world's highest incarceration rate. Do the dropping rates of violent crime in this country affect the way you view the country's high incarceration rate? Explain.

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