1a One biological explanation of why males commit more crimes than females relates to the hormone testosterone. This sex hormone is much higher in males than females and there is some evidence linking it to aggression and also criminal behaviour. The study by Dobbs...
supports this biological explanation.
In this study, 692 male prisoners
gave saliva samples to be analysed
for testosterone levels. They also
examined the prison system records
to look at their previous crimes and
also behaviour within the prison.
Prisoners with high testosterone levels
were more likely to have committed
personal crimes e.g. rape/violence - these
are aggressive acts. Lower testosterone
levels were associated with property
crimes e.g. burglary, - far less aggression
is involved. Also, high testosterone
prisoners were more likely to
show overt confrontation and other
aggressive behaviour within the prison.
This biological evidence shows
a clear link between testosterone
and aggression/criminality. As
females naturally have less testosterone
this could explain the much lower
offending rate for females.

11b. The biological approach does
provide some explanation of
criminal behaviour, but it is
not a complete explanation. There
are several reasons for this.

Many biological explanations
are seen as reductionist,
this means they explain criminal
behaviour by reducing it to 1 factor, e.g. Testosterone as investigated by Dobbs for brain dysfunction as researched by Rave. Taking a reductionist approach means that other important factors may be ignored, for example, situational factors such as peer pressure may also be an important influence on criminal behaviour. However, taking a reductionist approach has some benefits; it is a scientific approach and allows study of that 1 factor in depth, e.g. Rave could look at activity in specific parts of the brain such as the pre-frontal cortex using extremely scientific methods (radioactively tagging glucose so it can be measured using Positron Emission Tomography).

Using only biology to explain criminal behaviour does cause some problems also. This focuses only on the nature part of the debate. It’s explanations point to innate factors causing criminality, e.g. genetic abnormalities, as investigated by Barner. He found that in 1 family a genetic abnormality affected production of mono-amine oxidase A (MAO A) an...
The enzyme involved in the production of serotonin (a neurotransmitter) is the precursor to mental retardation and hence to criminal behaviour, e.g., rape/assault. However, this explanation ignores the importance of nurture on our behaviour. We also learn behaviours from our environment, and this might explain why not all of the 5 males studied actually showed aggressive behaviour. Farrow's study identified a combination of factors from nature (e.g., low IQ, impulsivity due to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and nurture (e.g., convicted parent, delinquent siblings). I think in conclusion this points to the fact that although biology is an important influence on criminal behaviour, we must also look at other explanations (e.g., situational factors) if we are to understand the causes of this negative behaviour.
There is a link between imprisonment and suicide. Many prisoners find the prison situation depressing and frightening and will see suicide as a way of ending their "intolerable" situation. Home Office figures show that in 2007 there were 92 suicides which is an increase on previous years. Overcrowding has been linked to suicide as it does increase the stress on prisoners. Also new inmates are at a much higher risk of suicide as they haven't adjusted to their new environment. The first night of incarceration is the highest risk of suicide. Dooley analysed records of all unnatural deaths in prison between 1972-1987 and found that there were 300 suicides, mostly amongst male prisoners awaiting final sentencing. They tended to occur at night. Often self harm can result in death, this was mostly women. Clearly, this evidence links prison to suicide.

Usefulness refers to 2 factors. One, can the research help provide human welfare? Clearly it can, as Dooley's research.
Shots reveal prisoners are at higher risk of suicide, so prison officers should monitor them closely for signs of distress in order to intervene before it's too late. The Home Office research would indicate that new prisoners should especially be monitored, perhaps by keeping them in a "low impact" wing where they can adjust to the prison environment more slowly. Plus use "suicide proof" rooms. These have no sharp edges or no ways of attaching a rope/cord to hang themselves.

Also monitor prisoners more at night.

The other factor of usefulness of research is whether the research has potential problems which might limit its usefulness. For example, Zimbardo's Stanford prison experiment was a simulated prison in a basement, this clearly lacks ecological validity as it does not resemble the reality of prison life. However, evidence from the study suggests that participants did view the situation as "real": for example, they referred to each other by number rather than name even when they didn't know they were being observed. Dooley's study might also lack usefulness.
as the simple only includes successful suicides. Many people attempt suicide, but officers intervene and save their lives. Many more people attempt suicide than complete it. The characteristics of those attempting suicide are missing from the study. This limits the usefulness of the research.

In conclusion, research into the psychological effects of imprisonment can be very useful, however flaws in the studies may also limit the usefulness.

6a. Johansson carried out research into work as a cause of stress. He was interested in 2 groups of workers. 14 "high risk workers. They worked on a production line in a sawmill. Features of their job which could cause stress were: repetition, machine-paced work, if they were slow it affected the whole team, solitary work, and pay was dependent on their work rate. The control group were 10 maintenance workers, their jobs were less stressful as they had more control, less pressure and they worked as a team where they could
Socialise as part of their job.

Stress was assessed by 3 methods:
Urine tests for catecholamine (product of adrenaline).
Self reports.
Or irritation, well being etc. and absence records. Baseline urine tests were taken at home.
The high risk group showed higher stress as:

1. Adrenaline levels were higher.
2. More absence along with stress related ailments occurring.
3. Self reported stress higher, wellbeing lower.

Clearly, this suggests that work is a source of stress.

b. Problems of researching the causes of stress can be a range of methodological issues. Generalisation from sample can be a problem, if the sample is not representative of the wider population the results can't be applied to that population. Johnsonson only studied 1 sex and therefore the results can't be generalised to other workplaces for example a school office.

In comparison the study by Geert raised into lack of control when viewing disturbing picture also had
GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

A poor sample of psychology students cannot be generalised to the wider population. They are a large group, generally higher intelligence than the general population. The fact they were psychology students highlights another problem - demand characteristics. They would be more likely to guess the aim of the study and may change their behaviour to help or hinder the researcher.

Another problem is that of validity. Do the measurements accurately measure what they are supposed to? Self reports may generate socially desirable answers. People in distress study may not want to admit their personal well being is low. However, they did combine this data with physiological measures of stress - urine tests - which would increase the validity of the study. A final problem is that of
extraneous variables, perhaps it is
other variables causing someone
stress, e.g. home problems etc.
This might have caused volunteers
urine tests to not really assess
whether work itself causes stress.
However, baseline measurements
taken at home to compare
to reduce the problem of
extraneous variables.
Clearly researchers do have problems
researching stress, but often they
find ways of reducing their impact.

A cognitive technique for
managing stress is stress inoculation
training developed
by Meichenbaum. It has
3 stages.

1. The therapist works closely
with the client to identify
dysfunctional thoughts, beliefs,
and maladaptive (self-defeating)
behaviours e.g. "I don't think
I'm good at exams so there's no
point trying"

2. The therapist helps the patient
to replace dysfunctional thoughts
beliefs and behaviours with healthier ones, e.g. relaxation training (breathing deeply), affirmations (positive statements - "I am calm, confident and collected").

3. The patient puts these skills into practice - firstly in low stress situations - slowly progressing to more stressful situations e.g. This bloody exam!

Weitenbaum found students using this technique reduce stress and improved test performance in his experiment.

b. Some techniques for managing stress focus on a cognitive approach - examining our thoughts and beliefs and how they affect our behaviour e.g. Weitenbaum. This is clearly a sensible approach as stress does have a strong mental component - different people in the
same situation can experience no stress to extreme stress—suggesting stress is "in the eye of the beholder". However, stress also affects the body, we get increased heart rate, muscle tension etc. when we are stressed. Therefore techniques should also focus on training the body to reduce the effects of stress. Budzynski used biofeedback as a behaviorist method for reducing stress. This involves using an electromyograph which measures muscle tension to give audio feedback on how tense neck muscles are. The higher the frequency of clicks is more tension. This gives instant feedback on whether a relaxation technique is working. This then reinforces correct use of relaxation techniques. He found this reduced tension, headaches and improved psychological functioning in his participants compared to a control group. A final way that stress is lessened is through social support. Waxler/Monsen
Investigated cancer survival rates in 183 women with breast cancer. He also assessed different types of social support the women had in their lives. Social support did increase survival rates in the women, especially from husbands, employment, contact with friends etc. This shows us that managing stress involves a biopsychosocial model of health. We must incorporate all 3 to reduce stress and the negative impact it has on our lives and health. Bio - our bodies, psycho - cognitive processes, social - our situations.