

# An account of a crime

Theme:

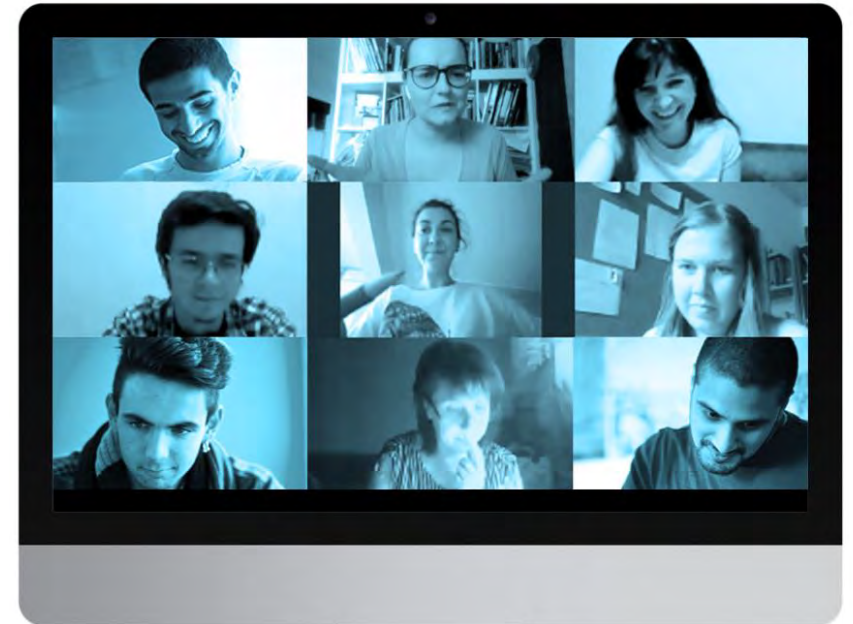
Government, Politics, Crime and Justice



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# Before we start, please make sure...

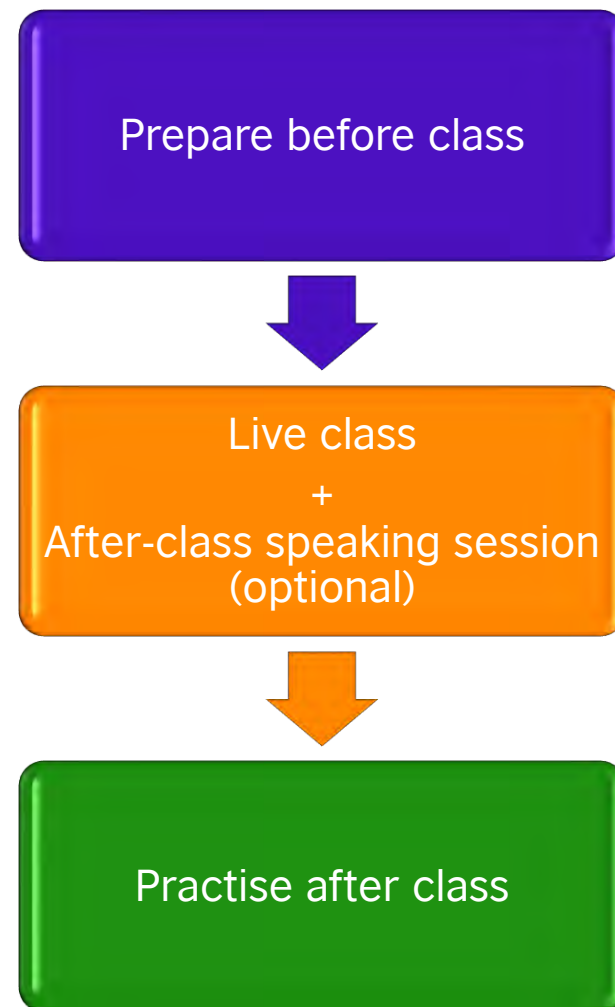
- ✓ your name on Zoom is clear (use Latin letters)
- ✓ your camera is **on** and mic is **off** (unmute when needed)
- ✓ you are in a quiet area that helps you focus
- ✓ you have a notebook or a note app ready to take notes



# Welcome to English Online

## How does it work?

You need to complete all three parts to get the most out of English Online.



# After-class speaking session

Stay back after class for 5 or 10 minutes to talk to your classmates from around the world.

**This extra speaking practice will help you...**

- improve your conversation skills
- practise using language learnt in class
- support and help your fellow students
- practise using English in a natural context
- become a part of a global learning community



After-class  
speaking  
sessions

# Pre-lesson activities

## Before the live lesson you...

- Listened to the account of Millennium Dome heist
- Revised narrative verb forms
- Learnt lexis associated with crime

# Lesson objective

What do you expect to learn by the end of this class?



# Lesson objectives

In this **live part** of the lesson, you will...

- Review **vocabulary connected with crime**
- Practice giving an **account of a robbery**



live  
class

# Lead-in

## Discuss with your partner(s).

- Have you or anyone you know ever been the victim of theft?
- Have you ever witnessed someone being robbed?
- Have you read or heard any accounts of famous thefts in your country?





# Language focus

**Write the correct words in the chat box.**

1. Someone who steals a purse or a wallet from you secretly.
2. Someone who threatens you on the street and makes you give them your money.
3. Stealing something from a supermarket, for example.
4. Entering someone's house and stealing possessions and money.
5. Entering a bank or a shop, for example, with a gun in order to steal.
6. Using someone's credit card details to get their money.
7. A slang word for a robbery, often armed.

# Language focus

1. Someone who steals a purse or a wallet from you secretly. **pickpocket**
2. Someone who threatens you on the street and makes you give them your money. **mugger**
3. Stealing something from a supermarket, for example. **shoplifting**
4. Entering someone's house and stealing possessions and money. **burglary**
5. Entering a bank or a shop, for example, with a gun in order to steal. **armed robbery**
6. Using someone's credit card details to get their money. **credit card theft**
7. A slang word for a robbery, often armed. **heist**

# Language focus

Complete the missing words.

crime	criminal
Thief	Theft
Mugging	mugger
shoplifting	shoplifter
burglary	burgler
robbery	Robber
Pickpocketing	pickpocket

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# Task



# Task Preparation

**You are going to reconstruct the story of a real-life robbery.**

Work with a partner, invent a story orally using all of the words and phrases in the chat box.

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## Story A:

warehouse

insider

poured petrol

combination to the vault

tiny blue van

7,000 gold ingots

all gold jewellery made in the UK

two pet Rottweilers

confessed

never been recovered

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## Story B

elite international criminal network

cash card chaos

banking system at risk

insider workers

magnetic strip

computer expert turned informer

16-year prison sentence

they could send her some flowers

local vicar

red-handed

## Story B

# Task

**Work with a partner who had a different story and tell each other the stories that you've invented.**

Compare your stories with the real accounts that you've read (click on the link in the chat box).

Whose story was closer to the real-life version?



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# Feedback

An account of a crime **Story A** On November 26, 1983, in the early hours of the morning, six armed men burst into the Brink's-Mat warehouse at Heathrow Airport. They had been tipped off that the warehouse contained £3 million in cash, but instead found piles of gold ingots worth nearly £28 million – £500 million at today's prices. Only three of the robbers were ever convicted – 'Mad' Mickey McAvoy and Brian 'The Colonel' Robinson who spent six months planning the crime, along with Robinson's brother-in-law Tony Black, who was the security guard 'insider'. With the help of Tony Black, the insider at the depot, the six robbers managed to turn off the security alarm and gain entry. Once inside, they poured petrol over the remaining guards and threatened to set them on fire unless they revealed the combination to the vault, which they had been told contained £3 million in cash. However, when they entered the vault they found a pile of 7,000 gold ingots as well as cash and boxes of diamonds. It took two hours to load the loot into their tiny blue transit van before making their getaway. The alarm was raised fifteen minutes later by which time there was no trace of them. None of the gang had ever been involved with the illegal gold trade. Much of the gold was melted down so as not to be traced. It is said that any gold jewellery made in the UK after 1993 is made from Brink's-Mat ingots. The remainder is thought to have been buried with only a few old-timers in the gangland networks knowing its whereabouts. On finding themselves to be unexpected millionaires, Robinson and McAvoy moved from their council homes to luxury mansions in Kent. As both were known to the police, such a move raised suspicions. McAvoy is said to have had two pet Rottweilers called Brinks and Mat. Having suspected all along that the robbers must have had inside help, police were quick to connect Robinson's brother-in-law, Black, who had been the last guard to arrive at work on the morning of the heist. He confessed and named McAvoy and his brother-in-law Robinson. In December 1984, Robinson and McAvoy were sentenced to 25 years each and Black to six. The vast majority of the gold has never been recovered.



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# Feedback

An account of a crime **Story B** An intensive surveillance operation was launched after police got wind of an underworld plot which included members of an elite international criminal network. The scam could have caused international cash-card chaos if it had succeeded. Police said it could have been the biggest theft in UK history and the entire banking system of the country could have been put at risk. The gang's plan was to use a few insider British Telecom workers to install phone taps on the phone lines between banks and ATMs. These would give access to crucial information. All cashpoint cards have a PIN number and a CVV (card verification value) hidden inside the magnetic strip. Every time the card is used these numbers are sent to banks in encrypted form. The plan was to record these encrypted numbers on a memory board, then feed the data into a computer where it would be decoded. The data could then be reconstituted in a magnetic strip on a new card. A vast international network of criminals could then use these new cards to withdraw money from cash dispensers all over the world, possibly totalling hundreds of millions of pounds. The gang went to great lengths to keep their plans secret. Their fatal mistake came when they recruited computer expert turned informer Martin Grant as their computer expert. Grant was recruited as he was coming to the end of his 16-year prison sentence for trying to burn his wife and child to death (twice). He was terrified at the prospect of doing anything to endanger his release, and even though the gang made veiled death threats against his mother saying they 'could send her some flowers', he finally confessed to the prison chaplain and local vicar Mr Bourne. Police then persuaded him to take on the role of insider when he was released from prison. As the gang organised their equipment, including 140,000 white plastic cards and carried out test runs in British telecom exchanges, Grant regularly called in to Mr Bourne's vicarage to give his reports. The operation was finally foiled when police raided the home of one of the gang members and caught them red-handed with computers ready to process thousands of cards.

That was a story of the robbery of century. It happened in the most popular warehouse in the UK.

One of the guys from the gung came to be employed by the warehouse and worked with them for 3 months. He was an insider.

Early in the morning, the gung poured some petrol in front of entrance to make police think that this was accident.

And only insider knew the special combination to the secret vault where they planned to keep their gold and then escape through fire.

They were planning to use a van that was hidden near the exit

They grabbed all the gold and started their escape through the back doors, through the fire.

2 rottweilers dogs have been waiting for them and caught them red handed. The robbers confessed in the crime and since then they feared dogs.

There was an abandoned warehouse in Kent which was used as a temporary hideout for criminals to keep the previously stolen 7,000 gold ingots guarded by two pet Rottweilers. In 2020, a tiny blue van was found parked nearby which made police suspicious as the area had been uninhabited since 2017. The poured petrol was noticed to be spilled all over the place and two passers-by confessed seeing random people visiting the warehouse from time to time which made policemen think something was not right. Even though they got ever so close to solve the crime, someone set the warehouse on fire therefore neither an insider nor any evidence was ever recovered but the combination to the vault.

# Review

# Lesson materials

Make sure you have

- downloaded the \*.pdf with this presentation
- saved the Zoom Chat



# What's next?



# After-class speaking session

You can talk about any topic that interests you!

Use these questions as a guide, if needed.

Is violent crime a big problem in your country?

Are there any places you are afraid to visit because of the high crime rate? If so, where?

What kinds of crimes do you think can be prevented? How?

Does your government talk a lot about combatting crime?

What are some things people can do to protect themselves from crime?

For help, contact:

[support.englishonline@britishcouncil.org](mailto:support.englishonline@britishcouncil.org)

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## Dos

- ✓ Treat everyone with respect
- ✓ Keep your camera on and participate
- ✓ Let others share ideas too
- ✓ Listen to everyone
- ✓ Click 'Leave' if you cannot stay back

## Don'ts

- ✗ Don't take pictures or record
- ✗ Don't share personal details
- ✗ Don't let your children be visible onscreen

After-class  
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