

The Mary Celeste

In which part of a ship would you find these things?

- crew's quarters • cargo • deck • lifeboat • sails
- the captain's cabin



Skills

1 Reading for specific information

Read the story quickly and fill in the missing information.

Mary Celeste

Ship's destination: _____

Ship's cargo: _____

Original number of people on board: _____

First sighting of the ship: _____

Beginning of US Naval Court investigation: _____

Date of ship's destruction: _____

A MARITIME MYSTERY

On 5 November 1872, Captain Benjamin Briggs and his crew raised the sails of their ship the *Mary Celeste* in New York's East River and sailed out of the harbour into the Atlantic Ocean. They were making for the Italian port of Genoa, where they planned to unload their cargo of industrial alcohol.

On 4 December, the ship was sighted by Captain Moorhouse of the ship *Dei Gratia*, about 600 miles west of the Azores. Puzzled by her irregular movements, Moorhouse sent a small boarding party to investigate. What they found on deck is still argued over today. The ship was deserted: the Captain, his wife, their two-year-old daughter and seven crew members, along with the only lifeboat, had all disappeared.

What they had left behind suggested that they must have abandoned the ship in a great hurry. Only some navigational instruments and the ship's official documents were taken. Everything else (provisions, water, clothing and the crew's tobacco) remained on board. Even the cargo was untouched. In the crew's accommodation below the decks, they found bedding and floors soaked with rainwater, suggesting the ship could have run into severe weather after leaving port.

On 13 December, the US Naval Court of Investigation started looking into the case of the *Mary Celeste* and the legend began

to take shape. The Chief Investigator concentrated on some strange discoveries made aboard the abandoned ship: an axe-mark and brown stains on the deck and Briggs' sword could have been evidence of a fight. This theory did not stand up, however, after tests showed that the brown stains were not blood and there was no other evidence of a conflict on board.

Another theory was that the captain and his family might have been murdered by his crew who had been drinking from one of the barrels of industrial alcohol, usually called methanol. But there were flaws in this theory, too. Methanol doesn't turn people into drunks: it poisons them.

A slightly more sensible theory was that the crew might have become alarmed by the amount of water the ship took on during a storm, and decided to abandon ship in the lifeboat. Yet Briggs, an experienced sailor, would have known the amount of water wasn't enough to threaten the ship.

The most likely explanation is connected with the ship's cargo. Industrial alcohol is potentially explosive. If something happened to one of the barrels on board, the crew would have to act quickly. Investigators did find out that one of the barrels was damaged. It could have been damaged during a storm and might have begun to release lethal fumes. Fearing an explosion, the captain may have ordered the crew to abandon ship. The crew lowered the lifeboat, which then sank during the violent storm. This would explain many of the mysterious features of the ship.

Unfortunately, it can't be put to the test: the ship was destroyed by fire in an insurance fraud 12 years after its crew disappeared. So the *Mary Celeste* took with her the last hope of solving the most famous maritime mystery of all time.

Focus magazine

2 Reading for general understanding

Four theories are suggested in the text about the crew's disappearance. What are they?

- 1 There had been a fight on board the ship.
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

3 Multiple choice questions

Choose the best answer to questions 1–4.

Exam training

Multiple choice questions Read the questions only (not the options), then read the text. This will help you to focus on what to look for in the text. After this, go back to the questions and read all the answers carefully before you choose one.

- 1 Why did Captain Moorhouse decide to send some men to board the *Mary Celeste*?
 - a He could see no one at all on board the ship.
 - b The sailors on the ship had sent a request for help.
 - c The ship was sailing in a very strange way.
 - d There was something odd about the shape of the ship.
- 2 What did the men discover after boarding the ship?
 - a All the essential provisions for survival had disappeared.
 - b There was evidence that the ship had met with a storm.
 - c The ship's instruments and documents were all below the decks.
 - d The crew's accommodation had not been slept in.
- 3 What does 'the legend *began to take shape*' mean?
 - a had not been heard by anyone before
 - b slowly developed into something definite
 - c gradually got longer and more complex
 - d became a story everyone wanted to hear
- 4 The mystery remained unsolved because the ship
 - a was too damaged for any conclusions to be drawn.
 - b sank as it was being brought back to the port.
 - c was broken up by an insurance company.
 - d was later deliberately set on fire.

Vocabulary

4 Verbs and meanings

A These pairs of verbs all appear in the article. Which verb in each pair, a or b, would you use to talk about 1–6?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1 wet clothing | a raise | b soak |
| 2 someone who felt confused | a puzzle | b concentrate |
| 3 a disagreement | a argue | b order |
| 4 being harmed | a damage | b sink |
| 5 getting out of prison | a release | b abandon |
| 6 something which has been ruined | a destroy | b disappear |

B What do the other verbs mean? Explain their meaning in your own words.

5 Words that go together

These word combinations all appear in the article. Can you describe in your own words what they mean?

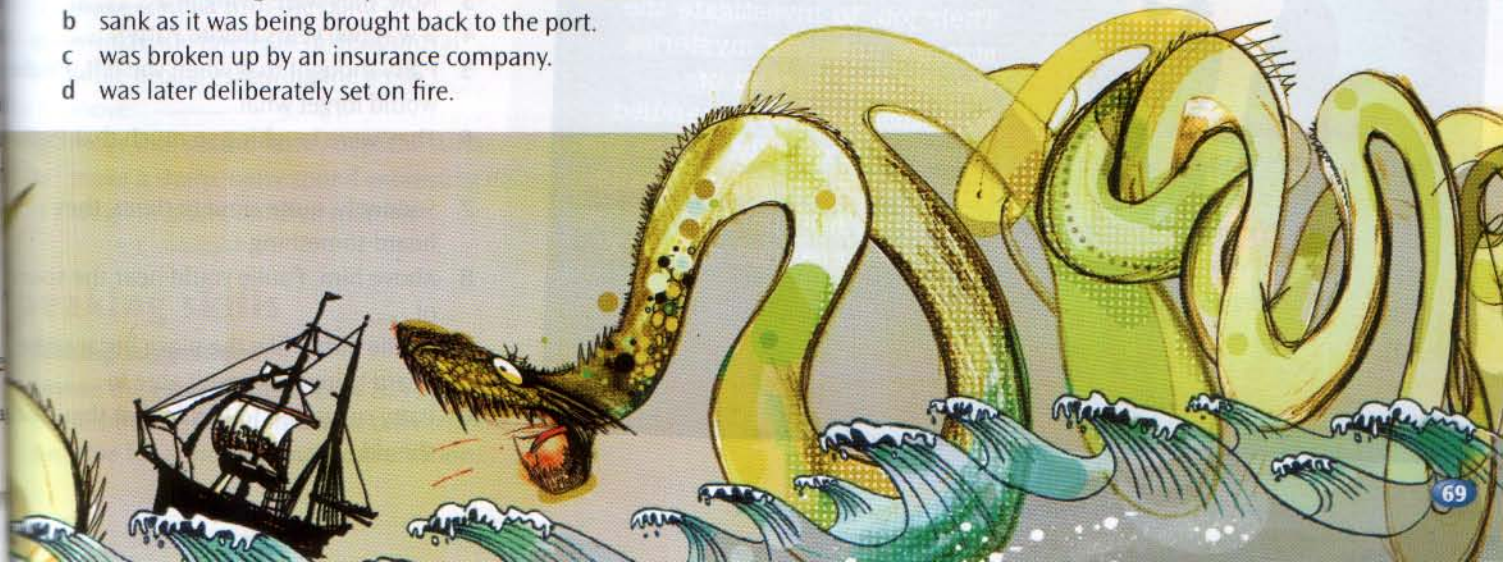
- 1 official documents
- 2 severe weather
- 3 strange discoveries
- 4 boarding party
- 5 likely explanation
- 6 lethal fumes
- 7 violent storm
- 8 last hope

Time to talk?

With a partner, discuss these theories about the *Mary Celeste*. Say why you think they could be possible explanations of what happened to the ship.

- 1 The ship's water poisoned the crew.
- 2 The crew ran out of food.
- 3 The crew died of a strange new virus.
- 4 A sea monster attacked the ship.

Can you think of any other possible explanations?

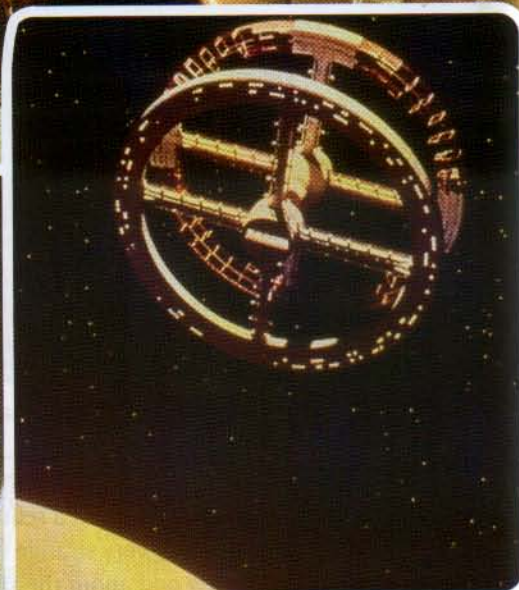


Listening and speaking

Science fiction

- 1 What does 'science fiction' mean?
- 2 What science fiction films / books have you seen / read? Did you like them? Why (not)?
- 3 Why do you think some people enjoy this kind of story?

Describe these scenes from well-known science fiction films. Do you recognise any of them? Which scene looks the most interesting to you? Why?



Listening skills

1 Completing sentences 19

A Read this description from the back of a science fiction book and answer the questions.

- 1 Who are Mulder and Scully?
- 2 Who do they work for?
- 3 What's their job?
- 4 What would happen if the public knew about these mysteries?
- 5 What are the X-files?

MULDER AND SCULLY, FBI

Mulder and his female partner, Scully, are FBI agents. Their job: to investigate the strange unsolved mysteries the Federal Bureau of Investigation wants handled quietly, but quickly, before the public finds out what's really out there. And panics. The cases are filed under 'X'.

B You are going to hear an extract from a book called 'Whirlwind', a story from *The X-Files*, based on a popular TV series. As you listen, complete sentences 1–10.

Exam training

Completing sentences Read the sentences carefully and try to imagine what the answers might be. Whatever you write to complete the sentence must fit in grammatically.

- 1 Paulie and his sister Patty were sitting beside _____
- 2 Their original home had been in _____
- 3 Now, they were living in a _____
- 4 It was two years before Patty's _____
- 5 Patty thought that when she left, Paulie would forget what _____
- 6 They were laughing so much that Patty _____
- 7 Suddenly, quite close to them, they heard something _____
- 8 Above him, Paulie could hear the sound of _____
- 9 Paulie didn't like the place because he heard things he wasn't able to _____
- 10 Patty suggested to Paulie that they should _____



2 Understanding what you hear 19

If necessary, listen to the extract again and discuss the questions.

- 1 What did Paulie and Patty really think of the place they had come to live in?
- 2 What were they both determined to do?
- 3 What time of the day was it?
- 4 What was the weather like?
- 5 What do you think Paulie and Patty really heard?
- 6 What do you think is going to happen next?

3 Verbs describing actions

These verbs in 1–12 appear in the listening. Group them according to the explanation of their uses on the right.

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 reach over | • a movement of the hand or arm |
| 2 frown | • a facial gesture |
| 3 grab | • a way of making a noise |
| 4 rub | • a complete body movement |
| 5 grin | |
| 6 whisper | |
| 7 touch | |
| 8 shift | |
| 9 crawl | |
| 10 release | |
| 11 giggle | |
| 12 hiss | |

Find an explanation for each of the verbs 1–12 in A.

- a move along the ground on your hands and knees
- b set free or let go
- c put your hand out towards
- d catch a tight hold of
- e speak very quietly under your breath
- f make contact with the hand
- g wrinkle the forehead in disapproval
- h smile broadly showing the teeth
- i move
- j move one's hand firmly over the surface of
- k make a sharp, noisy sound expressing disapproval
- l laugh in a silly, childish manner

Speaking skills

4 Making suggestions

Divide the expressions in *How can I...?* into two groups: those suitable for an informal conversation and those suitable for a more formal conversation.

How can I...?

Make suggestions

Why don't we / you ...?

I suggest that we / you ...

Let's ...

It might be a good idea if we / you ...

How about ...?

I think the best way of dealing with this situation would be to ...

If you ask me, I think we / you should ...

B Work with a partner. Imagine you are in the situations in 1–6. Make suggestions about what you think you should do next. Use suitable expressions from *How can I...?* to help you.

- 1 You and your brother hear a strange sound in the middle of the night in your living room.
- 2 You are walking home with a friend at night and you hear footsteps behind you.
- 3 You and a friend are robbed of all your money while on holiday.
- 4 The lift you are travelling in suddenly stops between two floors.
- 5 You and your parents hear a loud bang and see a flash of light in the street outside your house.
- 6 You and your family hear an announcement on the radio that a tornado is on its way.

5 Problem sounds 20

A Some of these words are on the tape. Underline which words in each group rhyme with each other.

Example

laughter daughter after water shorter

- | | | | | |
|----------|---------|----------|-------|--------|
| 1 enough | through | thorough | tough | cough |
| 2 drew | too | through | blue | took |
| 3 right | height | site | light | eight |
| 4 brown | own | blown | moan | alone |
| 5 course | worse | horse | force | coarse |
| 6 wear | bear | fair | fear | care |

B Now listen to check your answers.

6 Creating suspense

Work in groups. You are going to re-create an exciting scene which is full of suspense. It could be from a film or TV programme you have seen. Using these ideas, take turns to build up the scene and tell your story.

- Say where / when the scene / story starts.
- Explain briefly who the characters in your story are.
- Say where they were and what they were doing there.
- Explain why the scene was so exciting, e.g. what happened.
- Suggest an explanation for what happened.
- Say how the scene ended.
- Explain what happened next.

Vocabulary

1 Prepositions

Complete the article with the prepositions below.

• in • to • of • with • by • from

There's no longer any need to feel alarmed ¹ _____ things that go bump in the night. According ² _____ a recent study, ghosts could be the result ³ _____ the random activity of an idle brain.

The theory comes ⁴ _____ a study of hallucinations experienced ⁵ _____ blind people. It was put ⁶ _____ the test by scanning patient's brains while they were hallucinating. The scans showed evidence ⁷ _____ activity ⁸ _____ the brain's visual cortex when people were half asleep.

The visions they experienced were often frightening, such as grotesque faces ⁹ _____ prominent eyes and teeth, and ghostly figures ¹⁰ _____ old-fashioned costumes.

'When there's no information coming in and the brain is idle, it starts to produce these images,' said one researcher. 'I'm sure ghosts, fairies and witches all relate in some way ¹¹ _____ these disembodied hallucinations. It explains why characters ¹² _____ supernatural tales from around the world look so similar.'

The Express

2 Missing verbs

Complete the sentences with the suitable verbs in the correct form.

• abandon • damage • destroy • order • puzzle • raise

- There have been many plans _____ the wreck of the Titanic from the bottom of the ocean, but so far no-one has come up with one that worked.
- In the second World War, the retreating Nazi army _____ the bridges over the Danube to prevent the Allies from following them.
- The crew had no choice but _____ the sinking ship.
- The secret of the origin of crop circles _____ experts of the paranormal for decades.
- When the ship hit an iceberg, the Captain _____ the crew to lower the lifeboats.
- The storm seriously _____ the sails, making the ship unable to continue its journey.

3 Verbs describing actions

Complete the sentences with the suitable verbs in the correct form.

• whisper • touch • grab • rub • reach over • frown • grin • crawl

- Paul was too frightened to _____ the spider. Jenny had to pick it up and put it outside.
- Liz _____ hold of the rock and pulled herself up the side of the mountain.
- The thief _____ through the open window and into the house.
- Neil _____ something funny into Pam's ear. It made her laugh out loud.
- Tom _____ his ankle. He'd just fallen over and hurt himself.
- Matt _____ and took down his suitcase from the luggage rack.
- Why is Mike _____?
• He's disappointed about his exam results.
- Dave _____ when I told him the good news.

4 Making suggestions

We can use *suggest* with

- the gerund when the speaker is included in the suggestion: *Martin suggested going to the cinema.*
- a noun clause in the past tense: *Martin suggested that they went to the cinema.*
- a noun clause with *should*: *Martin suggested that they / you / we should go to the cinema.*
- an indirect object: *Martin suggested to his sister that she / they went / should go to the cinema.*

A Match the halves of these conversations.

- I'm worried about my exams.
 - I've got a terrible headache.
 - I'm bored.
 - I don't know how to fix this computer.
- Maybe you should phone the customer helpline?
 - Perhaps you ought to revise more?
 - Why don't you take an aspirin?
 - What about going out to the cinema?

B Now rewrite sentences a–d from A. The beginning of the sentences is given.

- Holly suggested that I _____
- The teacher suggested to Mike _____
- Jenny suggested that _____
- Mark suggested _____

Speaking

5 Problem-solving

In pairs, discuss solutions to these problem situations. The *How can I...?* on page 71 might help you.

- 1 You and your friends are camping in a forest. It's night and you hear a strange noise outside. What do you do?
- 2 You are driving along a deserted road when you see an abandoned car at the side of the road. There's someone running away from it. What do you do?
- 3 You and a friend are out walking when you see a strange light in the sky. It seems to be following you. What do you do?
- 4 You and your friends are watching a video at home when all the lights go out. You think you hear someone open the front door. What do you do?

6 The right word

Choose the correct option, a, b or c, to complete the text.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1 a logical | b considerable | c sensitive |
| 2 a panicked | b alarmed | c fearful |
| 3 a looking around | b looking over | c looking into |
| 4 a find out | b look out | c try out |
| 5 a take in | b take off | c take on |
| 6 a experiments | b experiences | c research |
| 7 a break | b avoid | c escape |
| 8 a make at | b make out of | c make for |
| 9 a run into | b run over | c run down |
| 10 a alone | b deserted | c vacant |
| 11 a make | b see | c watch |
| 12 a Quickly | b Suddenly | c Immediately |
| 13 a held | b kept | c seized |
| 14 a turned over | b turned up | c turned out |



Last weekend David Smith visited Hampton Court Palace and had a strange encounter.

A sudden wind made the hairs rise on the back of my neck... I had just set foot in the haunted gallery. 'A ghost?' I said. 'Actually there's a draught from those doorways,' grinned the tour guide.

For sceptics, there's always a ¹ _____ explanation. But recently so many visitors have been ² _____ by the sight of a phantom that Hampton Court Palace has called in the ghostbusters.

Dr Richard Wiseman, a professional investigator of the paranormal, is ³ _____ the sightings. He's filling Henry VIII's home with 21st century gadgets to try to ⁴ _____ whether the ghost really exists.

But as he prepared to ⁵ _____ the paranormal, Dr Wiseman admitted: 'I don't think we're going to find a ghost here. I don't believe in ghosts. But I don't think people are lying,' he adds. 'I'm here to understand what have been real ⁶ _____, and I have to admit this is quite a mystery.'

People say the ghost is Henry's VIII's wife, the 20-year-old Catherine Howard. Catherine spent her last days at Hampton Court before being beheaded at the Tower of London. Days before her death she tried to ⁷ _____ from her lodging and ⁸ _____ the room of the King. But before she could reach him and beg for mercy, she was dragged back.

Now visitors to Hampton Court are invited to identify areas of the gallery where they feel "cold", "tingly" or something more to help Dr Wiseman's ghost-hunt.

One night I went to the gallery alone, hoping to ⁹ _____ the ghost. It was 1 a.m., the gallery was ¹⁰ _____ and it was difficult to ¹¹ _____ things out in the darkness. I couldn't quite walk along the corridor without expecting something dreadful to happen.

¹² _____ there was a noise – the door was slowly opening. I ¹³ _____ my breath, then as I turned round, I was blinded by bright white light. Was this the ghost of Catherine? No, it wasn't. It ¹⁴ _____ to be the newspaper's photographer armed with a camera flash!

From 'A Palace Spook: not a ghost of a chance' by David Smith, *The Express* – Internet Edition

Let's focus on past modals

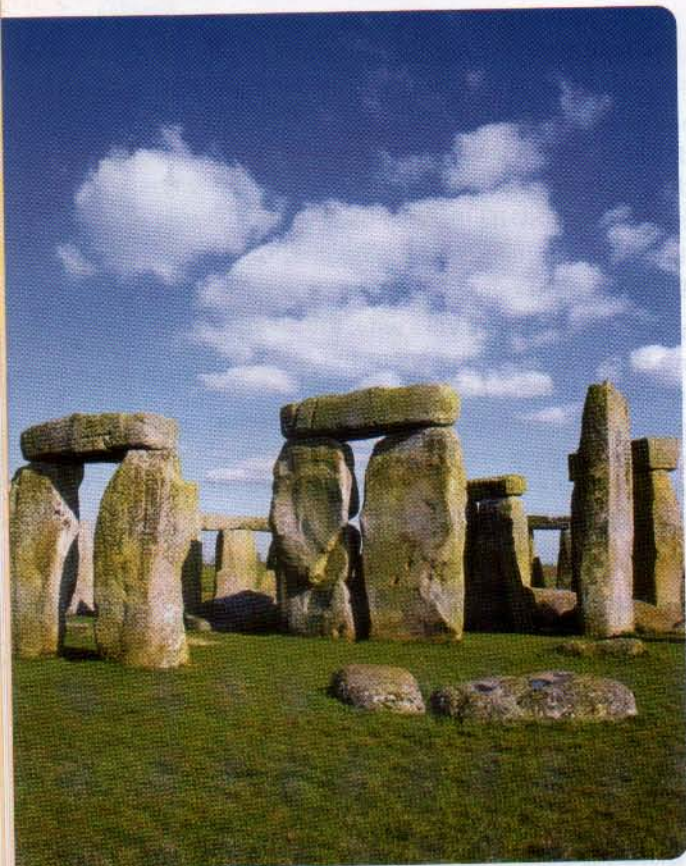
Quick quiz

Choose the correct information.

- 1 Modals form their negative by adding 'not' / using 'do'.
- 2 Modals form questions by using 'do' / inversion.
- 3 One modal can have many different meanings / forms.

1 Note-taking 21

- A Describe what you can see in this picture. Can you guess what it is or might have once been?



- B You are going to hear a news item about the ancient monument Stonehenge, which is in the south of England. Read the notes carefully, then fill in the missing information.

Stonehenge

Meaning of 'Stonehenge': _____

Possible date of building: _____

Possible nationality of 'architect': _____

Where stones probably came from: _____

Possible purpose of the building: _____

2 Comprehension

Listen again if necessary, and find out:

- 1 how popular Stonehenge is.
 - 2 why the druids couldn't have built Stonehenge.
 - 3 why Stonehenge couldn't have been designed by an English person.
 - 4 what problem the builders might have had with the stones.
- Do you have any buildings or monuments like this in your country?

3 Past modals and meaning

- A Which of the past modals *must have*, *might have*, *needn't have*, *may have*, *should have* or *ought to have* expresses:

- 1 possibility?
- 2 certainty?
- 3 obligation?
- 4 lack of necessity?

- B Expand the notes at the end of these sentences using one of the past modals in A.

Example

I got up late so I missed the bus to school. I / get up earlier.

I ought to have got up earlier!

- 1 I only got 3 out of 10 for my homework. I / do better!
- 2 Jim isn't here yet. It's not like him – he's always on time. His car / break down.
- 3 I phoned Mary this morning but there was no reply. She / leave the house early.
- 4 I can't find my swimming things anywhere. I / leave / at the pool.
- 5 I brought my swimming things but we don't have swimming today. I / bring them.
- 6 I called you earlier but you didn't answer the phone. You / be asleep.
- 7 The grass looks wet. It / rain last night.
- 8 Mary phoned last night after I wrote to her. I / write her a letter.

4 Logical explanations

- A Match the past modals on the left with the meanings on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 can't / couldn't have | a This is possible. |
| 2 must have | b This is almost certainly impossible. |
| 3 could have | c This is almost certainly the case. |

- B Write sentences saying why the people can't / couldn't / must have done these things. Use the verb in brackets.

Example

Paul (paint) this picture. He has no artistic talent whatsoever!

Paul couldn't have painted this picture.

- 1 Sam (discover) a new restaurant in town. He said he had a fantastic meal out last night.
- 2 Sara (get) top marks in the exam if only she had worked harder.
- 3 The neighbours (go) on holiday because their car is still in the driveway.
- 4 The twins (come) back home very late last night. It's midday and they still haven't got out of bed yet.
- 5 I (phone) you to say that we'd be late. I forgot I had my mobile with me!

5 Choosing the right modal

Read this article about an exciting discovery in the United States. These modal verbs are missing. Can you put them in the correct place?

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a needn't have worried | e might have been damaged |
| b can't have been | f could have formed |
| c might have originated | g must have been put there |
| d ought to have been stopped | h might have been |

Construction workers in the United States ¹ _____ too happy when they were suddenly ordered to stop all building work. It appears that the area they were excavating for the foundation of a new block of flats revealed some ancient stones in a circular formation. At this early stage, it is impossible to say exactly what the stones ² _____ put there for. It was originally thought that they ³ _____ part of an ancient temple but one thing is certain: they ⁴ _____ several hundred years ago, if not longer.

Archaeologists, alarmed that the stones ⁵ _____ by the excavation work, ⁶ _____. The construction company agreed to put a halt to the building work so that experts could determine what period of history the stones ⁷ _____ from. However, they also stressed that the stoppage was costing millions of dollars a day and that they would not be able to wait indefinitely.

City officials agreed that work ⁸ _____ sooner but assured inhabitants that their history would be preserved at all costs. However, as one local put it, 'What good is a pile of stones when what we want is new homes?'

Let's activate!

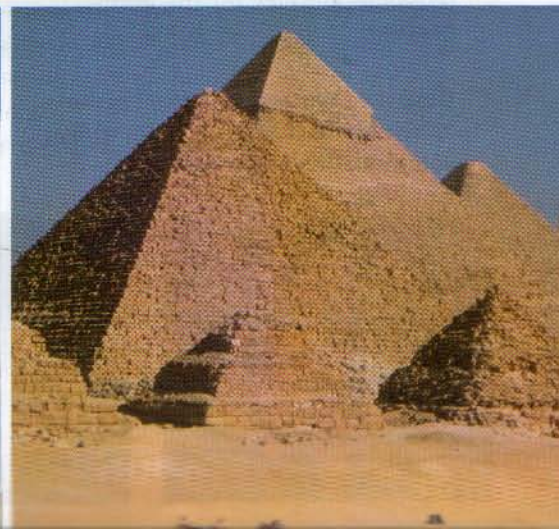
How did they do it?

In pairs or small groups, describe what these pictures show, then discuss:

- how these monuments and buildings could / might / must / can't have been constructed.
- what it must have been like working to build these monuments.

7 Discussion

Imagine you had discovered some interesting historical remains on a piece of land where you were going to build a house. In small groups, decide what you would / might / could have done. Give reasons for your decisions.



A murder investigation



- 1 Why do you think so many people enjoy reading detective stories?
- 2 How does the writer help the reader to try and work out who the criminal is?

Studying the sample

1 Understanding the task

- A** Read the detective story quickly and choose the best title for it.

Clues in a rubbish bag
Murder at Willowdale Court Mansions
Accidental death
The man with the bald head

- B** Now read the story again and complete the missing information.

Possible crime committed: _____
Location: _____
Victim: _____
Clues: _____
Suspects: _____
Possible motives for the crime: _____
Possible solution to the crime: _____

- C** Describe the people in these pictures. Which of the characters in the story do you think they represent?



1 It was a cold winter afternoon just before my birthday when Detective Sergeant Finney rang to say there had been a death in a mansion block. Accidental, according to the neighbours. A man had fallen down some steps.

2 Snow began as I left for Willowdale Court Mansions. The deceased was Graham Dunn, a 56-year-old, divorced estate agent who lived alone. The body was at the back near the dustbins. Nearby, there was a plastic bag and some rubbish which had fallen out of it: an apple, some tea bags, a bottle of shampoo, a tin of cat food and a nappy. I was suspicious. The man was bald. Why a bottle of shampoo? He had no pets or children, either. The rubbish couldn't have been his. We went to talk to the neighbours.

3 DS Finney and I began our enquiries in the basement. The owners, Rebecca and Stewart Morris, a couple in their twenties, had a baby. They told us that Dunn often complained about its crying. They made us tea. They had noticed Dunn's body only when they let the cat in.

4 The owner of the flat on the first floor was a divorcee, Abigail Stratton. She had two cats, and she often looked after the baby for the couple downstairs. She couldn't stand the deceased, but she didn't say why. She offered us tea.

5 On the ground floor, we had a look at Dunn's flat. The door was open and his rubbish bin was empty. Otherwise all was in order. We decided to talk to the remaining neighbours.

6 A woman called Mrs Pritchard lived alone on the second floor. She admitted that she didn't like Dunn. All day long he played music. Finally, we questioned the porter, but he had been next door all day mending a roof.

7 The death certificate showed Dunn's death was no accident. The murderer must have left the rubbish to make it look accidental, but the rubbish provided clues. We were fairly certain who the murderer was. We stood on the doorstep, about to push a bell.

Can you guess whose bell it was?

Can you think why the person might have committed the crime?

2 Creating atmosphere

In which paragraph(s) does the writer:

- 1 ask himself a direct question?
- 2 describe what the weather was like?
- 3 leave the reader in suspense?
- 4 mention the time of year?
- 5 use very short sentences, as if he is thinking aloud or reading his notes?

Steps to better writing

3 Visualising your story

- 4 Decide which of the words in the list below could be used to describe:

- a the weather.
- b surroundings or objects.
- c a person's physical appearance.
- d a person's character.

• cold, grey • poor, unfortunate • a light fall of
• half-eaten • disposable • smiling, round-faced
• strong-looking • rather cramped
• middle-aged • with short, brown hair
• appallingly loud • vital

- 5 The words in A could be written into the story to make it more interesting. Can you decide where to put them? The list follows the order of the story.

4 Creating characters

- 6 Read this description of the victim in the detective story, then use the notes in 1–3 to write a sentence describing each character below.

Example

The victim was a bald, elderly man called Graham Dunn, a 56-year-old estate agent, who was divorced and lived alone.

- 1 female / red-haired / middle-aged / Ruth Thompson / 48 / shop assistant / unmarried / three cats
- 2 male / dark-haired / youngish / Brian Smith / 32 / computer salesman / separated / 2 children
- 3 male / grey-haired / older / Tim Winter / 68 / retired / married / no children

- 7 Now write one sentence building up a character of your own.

5 Paragraph openers

Expand these notes to make one or two sentences you could use to begin paragraphs in a detective story.

- 1 it / be / one / day / just / New Year / 6 p.m. / phone / ring
- 2 snow / begin / as / make my way / hotel / deceased / name?
- 3 we / enquiries / reception / deceased / guest / two weeks
- 4 2nd floor / look / deceased / room / everything in order
- 5 hotel porter / admit / people not like / deceased / unfriendly
- 6 death certificate / clear / death / not accident / murderer / be / member of staff

Writing your detective story

6 Understanding the task

You are going to write a short detective story of your own. It should contain five or six paragraphs.

7 Planning

Brainstorm your ideas in small groups. Decide:

- when and where the story is going to take place.
- what is going to happen.
- what characters you are going to create.
- who is investigating what happens.
- what the suspects are doing when the event happens.

As you make your decisions, make notes of the details of your story before you start to write.

Exam training

Planning your writing efficiently When you are planning your story remember that you are being tested on your ability to write in good English, not on your ability to be a best-selling author!

8 Writing

Write your story as if you were a detective, possibly including an illustration of either the place, an object or a character in the story. Do not reveal the identity of the person who committed the crime.

9 Checking

As you write your story, check that you have:

- described the weather and the time of year.
- described the place and important objects.
- built up characters sufficiently.
- used adjectives and adverbs to give more details.
- created atmosphere.
- provided clues for readers.
- provided a title.

10 Guess who did it!

In pairs, read your stories to each other and try to guess who committed the crime and why.

Vocabulary

1 Adjectives describing people

Put the adjectives into the correct categories.

- bald • elderly • small • curly • grey-haired • middle-aged
- thin • dark-haired • ugly • straight • casual • youngish
- fashionable • in their teens / twenties • scruffy • tall
- overweight • well-built • interesting-looking • attractive
- red-haired • beard • blonde • moustache • wavy • smart
- suspicious-looking

- 1 age:
- 2 size:
- 3 hair:
- 4 clothes:
- 5 general appearance:

2 Order of adjectives

Put the adjectives in 1–5 in the correct order.

- 1 A / black / small / suspicious-looking ... briefcase.
- 2 A(n) / Swiss / gold / expensive ... watch.
- 3 A / leather / brown / large ... chair.
- 4 A(n) / fast / impressive-looking / Japanese ... motorbike.
- 5 Some / old / dirty-looking / blue ... jeans.

Grammar

3 Past modals

Rewrite these sentences using *should(n't) have / ought not to have, needn't have, may have, could have* or *might have*.

- 1 It was a silly thing to argue about.
We ...
- 2 It wasn't a good idea to lie about your exam results.
You ...
- 3 If you hadn't wasted your money, you wouldn't be hard-up.
You ...
- 4 It's possible that police have caught the murderer.
The police ...
- 5 It wasn't necessary to take a coat. It was hot all day.
I ...
- 6 John had the ability to win the race, but he fell over at the start.
John ...
- 7 It's probable that Chris failed his exam. He didn't do enough revision.
Chris ...

4 Logical explanations

Write sentences using the prompts in 1–7 and *can't have, could have, couldn't have* or *must have*. There may be more than one answer for each sentence.

- 1 I'm certain that he was at the bank that afternoon. He / commit / the robbery.
- 2 Ruth is on holiday at the moment. You / not see her / at the record shop.
- 3 Graham didn't pass his driving test. He / not practise / very much.
- 4 I can't remember when Andy left exactly. It / be / 8 or 9 o'clock.
- 5 Tom ran the London Marathon last year.
• That / be / difficult.
- 6 I'm sure Mel will turn up. She / not forget / the party was this evening.
- 7 I wish I'd bought a lottery ticket. I / win / the jackpot.

5 Speculating about past events

A Choose the best modal in 1–6 to complete this discussion about the detective story on page 76.

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Clare | So who do you think committed the crime? |
| Luke | Well, it ¹ <i>couldn't have been / mustn't have been</i> the porter because he was mending the roof all day. |
| Yasmin | And it ² <i>mightn't have been / can't have been</i> Mr and Mrs Morris because they reported the crime. |
| Clare | What about Mrs Pritchard? |
| Rob | Well, she ³ <i>can have done / might have done</i> it. She didn't like Dunn's music, but that's not really a motive. |
| Yasmin | I think it ⁴ <i>must have been / should have been</i> Abigail Stratton. She's the only one who won't say why she disliked Dunn. And that's suspicious. |
| Clare | The detective ⁵ <i>needn't have asked / should have asked</i> her more questions. We ⁶ <i>could have identified / must have identified</i> the murderer by now. |

B Do you agree with their arguments? Why (not)?

Writing

6 ■ Ordering paragraphs

Read the story and put the paragraphs in the correct order.

The runaway

1 After about ten minutes, we arrived at a house on the edge of the village. I got out of the car and knocked on the door. A middle-aged woman opened it. She looked at me suspiciously when I explained that I'd brought her daughter home. 'Daughter?' she said. 'But I haven't got a daughter.' The girl must have mistaken the house, I thought. After all, it was a dark night. 'Her name's Sarah Pritchard,' I said hopefully. 'Maybe you know where she lives?' The woman's face went pale. 'Pritchard?' she whispered. 'Why, they used to live here, but they moved out years ago. There was a family tragedy. A road accident, I think.'

2 It was freezing now and the stars shone brightly in the winter sky. She was very cold, so I helped her in the back of the car and covered her up with a coat. Her name was Sarah Pritchard and she lived with her mother and two brothers in a nearby village. As I carried on along the road, it seemed to get colder. 'Poor thing,' I thought. 'She looks so tired.'

3 As I walked back to the car, I started to feel uneasy. There was no sign of Sarah. All that remained was a crumpled coat on the back seat.

4 It was a cold December night and I was driving along a deserted country lane. Suddenly I noticed a pale figure standing at the side of the road. It was a young girl. I stopped the car to see if she was all right. The girl must have been in her teens. She had short dark hair and a sad expression on her face. She looked as if she'd been crying. When I asked her what was wrong, she frowned and said she was running away. I smiled and told her that perhaps it wasn't the best night to leave home and offered to take her back.

7 Details of a story

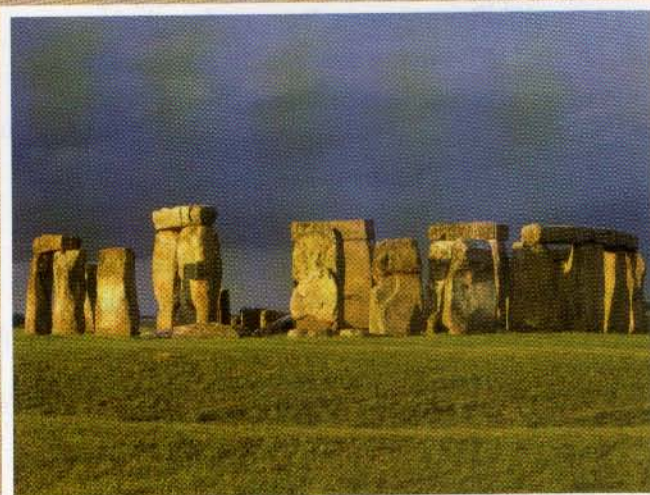
A Now read the story again and answer these questions.

- 1 Where was the writer? What was the weather like? What time of day was it?
- 2 How does the writer describe the girl / the woman?
- 3 What strange thing happened as they drove towards the village?
- 4 Why was the woman suspicious? Why did she suddenly go pale?
- 5 How did the writer feel as he went back to the car?
- 6 What happened to Sarah in the end?

B What words and phrases does the writer use to order events in the story?

Factfile

How much do you know about Stonehenge? Complete the text with the numbers below.



• 600 • 2000 • 80 • 240 • 2500 • 50 • 20

Stonehenge is one of the wonders of the world. It was constructed between ¹ _____ and ² _____ BC and is as old as many of the temples and pyramids in Egypt. However, nobody knows who built the ancient stone monument or exactly why it was built.

³ _____ blocks of bluestone were used to form the inner circle of Stonehenge. These were brought from the Prescelly Mountains in Wales, almost ⁴ _____ miles away, and were probably transported by rafts along the coast, then dragged to the site.

Massive sarsen stones were used for the outer circle. These were taken from Marlborough Downs, over ⁵ _____ miles away, and some of them weigh as much as ⁶ _____ tons. According to experts it would have taken at least ⁷ _____ men to drag each stone up the steepest part of the route! Today, it's still a mystery how such huge stones could have been moved there at all.

Grammar

1 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

THE ROSWELL MYSTERY

UFOs are big business. Movie producers ¹ _____ (make) huge fortunes out of them, scientists and writers make their livings from investigating them, and huge parts of the Internet ² _____ (dedicate) to them. In fact, most people ³ _____ (be) fascinated by the thought of aliens visiting Earth.

Perhaps one of the most famous UFO sightings ⁴ _____ (happen) in Roswell, New Mexico in 1947. In July, some strange wreckage and a crash site ⁵ _____ (find) at the US Air Force base at Roswell, just a month after someone ⁶ _____ (spot) nine disc-shaped UFOs flying over Mount Rainier. All sorts of reports followed of aliens, dead and alive, which ⁷ _____ (see) at the site. An investigation ⁸ _____ (carry out) by Government Agents, but what actually happened ⁹ _____ (never / reveal).

To try and find out more, we ¹⁰ _____ (interview) Dr Green, a member of the Roswell Institute. Several years ago, Green ¹¹ _____ (work) at the Centre when he ¹² _____ (contact) by the son of the security man who ¹³ _____ (be) on guard duty when the UFO crash happened. Apparently, his father ¹⁴ _____ (see) alien corpses and even a live alien near the crash site.

After the incident, government agents ¹⁵ _____ (threaten) his father and he was forbidden to tell anyone about what he ¹⁶ _____ (witness). But many years later, when he was ill, he ¹⁷ _____ (reveal) it to his son, who then told Dr Green. Soon afterwards, the son himself ¹⁸ _____ (warn off) by mysterious men dressed in black suits.

Since Roswell, there ¹⁹ _____ (be) thousands of UFO sightings worldwide. Some ²⁰ _____ (be) explained by natural phenomena, but what about the others?

And if there really are extraterrestrials living on alien planets, ²¹ _____ (be) interested in visiting us?

2 Choose the best alternative.

- As soon as Trevor *noticed* / *was noticing* the strange light in the sky, he reported it to the police.
- By the time the police arrived, the strange light *had disappeared* / *disappeared*.
- Did you visit* / *Had you visited* New Mexico in 1947?
- The guard saw the alien while he *had worked* / *was working* at Roswell.
- After he *had seen* / *saw* the alien, he wanted to tell people about it.
- Scott was fascinated. He *has never heard* / *had never heard* about Roswell before.
- Debra was tired. She *had been reading* / *was reading* about strange phenomena all night.
- Eddie *told* / *was telling* a ghost story when all the lights went out.
- Tina *wasn't believing* / *didn't believe* in ghosts until she saw one.
- I *was hearing* / *heard* a strange noise while I was lying in bed. It sounded like an aeroplane *was flying* / *flew* over the house.

3 Complete these adverb clauses with *if*, *so that*, *although*, *because*, *so ... that*, *while* or *when*.

- The UFO story was _____ mysterious _____ everyone wanted to know more.
- _____ I didn't believe in aliens, I decided to visit Roswell.
- I went to the Air Force base _____ I could see if the story was true.
- _____ I was there, I had a strange experience.
- _____ people asked me about it, I couldn't remember anything.
- _____ I had remembered something, I might have proved that the story was true.
- No one listened to me _____ I had no proof.

4 Choose the best modal for each sentence.

- Tim is convinced he saw a UFO.
 - He *must have* / *should have* imagined it!
- I can't find my mobile phone anywhere.
 - You *ought to have* / *may have* left it at school.
- I've brought this *Star Trek* video to watch this evening.
 - You *needn't have* / *couldn't have*. We've already seen it.
- I think Peter has forgotten about my birthday.
 - He *can't have* / *must have* done. He never forgets anything.
- I've finished repairing the computer.
 - You *can't have* / *should have*. You only started 10 minutes ago!
- Clare was unsure about what she saw.
 - Do you think she *might have* / *ought to have* had a paranormal experience?

Vocabulary

5 Complete the sentences with one of these phrasal verbs in the correct form.

• track down • back up • turn into • break up • take off • pile up

- 1 Unanswered emails begin to _____ on my computer whenever I go on a long holiday.
- 2 The rocket _____ and disintegrated as it entered the Earth's atmosphere.
- 3 My career finally _____ after I got the scholarship to Harvard.
- 4 The agents of the government failed to _____ the source of the UFO reports.
- 5 Kim _____ Tony's story about the haunted house. She had had a similar experience.
- 6 The Roswell incident _____ a source for science fiction films and novels.

6 Put the words in brackets into the correct form.

- 1 Pam is very _____ (ambition). She wants to be an astronaut at NASA.
- 2 Karen questioned Tim's _____ (believe) in the paranormal. She thought he was very gullible.
- 3 The expedition to Mars was very _____ (success). Scientists found out a lot about the planet.
- 4 Jess has _____ (confident) in her horoscope. The predictions are often true.
- 5 I've always had a lot of _____ (enthusiastic) for astrology. It's a fascinating subject.
- 6 The audience enjoyed the show. The magician's _____ (perform) was very good.
- 7 Bill is very arrogant. He finds it difficult to accept _____ (criticise).
- 8 If you want to work abroad, you need the _____ (able) to learn languages.

Complete the text with the prepositions from the list below.

• for • in • by • at • to • of • as • under • with

Simon studied physics ¹ _____ university and had always been interested ² _____ a career as a rocket scientist. One day, quite ³ _____ chance, he saw a newspaper advertisement ⁴ _____ a job ⁵ _____ a scientist at NASA, so he applied ⁶ _____ it. Amazingly he was offered a contract, but when he first started, he was alarmed ⁷ _____ the amount ⁸ _____ work involved. At first, he found it difficult to deal ⁹ _____ all the things he had to do. He always felt ¹⁰ _____ pressure, but fortunately his colleagues gave him a lot of support. His first shuttle launch really put his talent ¹¹ _____ the test, but he managed to get through it. Everyone was proud ¹² _____ what he achieved.

Listening

8 You are going to hear an interview with 19-year-old Jordan Walker, an Internet entrepreneur. As you listen, fill in the missing information.

Jordan Walker – Career File

Jordan has been interested in computers since ¹ _____

Today Jordan has made £4 million from ² _____

The idea for his first website came from emailing ³ _____

It was very successful and was visited by ⁴ _____ a day.

Eventually the site was bought by ⁵ _____

Jordan's next idea was inspired by ⁶ _____

His new website provides students with:

- ⁷ _____
- sample essay plans
- ⁸ _____

There are also links to ⁹ _____

In the future, Jordan wants to ¹⁰ _____

His advice to other entrepreneurs is ¹¹ _____ and ¹² _____

B Jordan's ambition is to get a university degree. What are your ambitions? What would you like to be doing in two / five / fifteen years' time? Why?