11 Crime detection

AIMS: Vocabulary related to crime • Identifying information • Adjusting reading speed • True/False/Not Given questions

Part 1: Vocabulary


1


2


3


4

1 **The pictures show common objects which are used as weapons in a famous murder mystery game. Match the pictures to the words.**

..... spanner ..... lead pipe ..... rope ..... candlestick

2a **The following are idioms related to crime. Match them with their meanings.**

1	to keep your nose clean	**a**	when you are charged a great deal of money for something and you think this is unfair or unreasonable (British, informal)
2	to get a slap on the wrist	**b**	to run away to avoid paying for something or to escape trouble (slang)
3	to face the music	**c**	to do whatever you like without anyone controlling or punishing you (informal)
4	to be above board	**d**	to behave well and stay out of trouble (informal)
5	to do a runner	**e**	something that was bought at little cost (informal)
6	it was a steal	**f**	to be in the open, without dishonesty
7	to get away with murder	**g**	to put yourself in a position where you will be punished or criticized
8	it's daylight robbery	**h**	to get a light punishment

2b **Choose the correct sentence ending a, b or c.**

i *It's daylight robbery: they want to charge me*

a £15 for a teddy bear.
b £15 for a gold necklace.
c £15 for a holiday in Turkey.

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ii *I can't believe I had dinner in a nice restaurant but my date did a runner and ...*
- **a** I had to pay the bill for both of us.
- **b** arrived late.
- **c** is very sporty.

iii *She went to court and got a slap on the wrist:*
- **a** 20 years in prison.
- **b** three years in prison.
- **c** 12 hours of community service.

iv *It was a steal: I paid*
- **a** £15 for a teddy bear.
- **b** £150 for a holiday in Turkey.
- **c** £15,000 for a diamond ring.

v *She has kept her nose clean for three years now and*
- **a** is feeling much better.
- **b** has not been caught by the police in that time.
- **c** has not done anything illegal in that time.

vi *When he gets home, he'll have to face the music because*
- **a** I want to have a word about the money he has spent.
- **b** I want to let him listen to the album I bought.
- **c** I want to tell him about my mistakes.

vii *She's been getting away with murder but*
- **a** she has not gone to court yet.
- **b** she'll have to do all her own washing from now on.
- **c** she is not normally a violent person.

2c **Complete these sentences with idioms from exercise 2a. You may have to make some changes to the form.**

1 It's difficult in this area to ..... but neither of my children have ever had to speak to the police.
2 You want me to pay £8.50 for postage costs? That's ..... !
3 She lived there for eight weeks without paying rent and basically ..... .
4 I know I'll have to ..... later but it's worth it to stay out until 4 a.m.
5 I can't believe he stole my dog and all he got from the judge was ..... .
6 She says it's ..... , even though most people think she is not allowed to charge an entrance fee.
7 I once waited more than half an hour for the bill to arrive in a restaurant and I nearly ..... .
8 Come on, ladies, I'm selling watches for under £10 - surely that's ..... .

Exam tip

Don't waste too much time on unknown words: sometimes you don't need them. When it is useful, have a guess. But be careful too: remember that idioms are not to be taken literally.

3 **Which of the following is NOT a synonym of 'in prison'?**

in gaol | in the slammer | locked up | behind bars | serving time | in jail | doing time | closing time | imprisoned

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Exam information | True/False/Not Given

In the exam, you may be asked whether information is correct or not. You will be given a list of statements. If the text confirms the statement, your answer should be 'TRUE'. If the text contradicts the statement your answer should be 'FALSE'. If it is impossible to know from the text if the statement is true or not, your answer should be 'NOT GIVEN'.

Do not use your own opinion to answer but check in the text.

1 **Do the sentences on the left provide answers to the questions on the right? Put a tick when they do, or write NOT GIVEN if they don't. Use only the information in the statements.**

Sentences	Questions	✓ or NOT GIVEN
Fingerprints have been found that date back thousands of years to the time of the ancient Egyptians.	1 Do we have computers that help us determine how old fingerprints are?	
	2 Did the ancient Egyptians live thousands of years ago?	
In 1910, Edmond Locard set up what is thought to be the first police crime laboratory in Lyons in France.	3 Is Edmond Locard French?	
	4 Is Lyons in France?	
DNA fingerprinting was first used in the1980s when it was used as evidence to convict murderer Colin Pitchfork.	5 Was DNA fingerprinting technically possible in 1990?	
	6 Did Colin Pitchfork commit murder?	

2 **Read the statements below and write TRUE if the text next to it confirms the information, FALSE if it contradicts the information, or NOT GIVEN if there is not enough information.**

Text	Statements	TRUE/FALSE/ NOT GIVEN
The Scenes of Crime Officers (SOCOs) that seal off (= stop people from entering), record and collect evidence from crime scenes are people employed by police forces but not police officers themselves.	1 SOCO means Scenes of Crimes Officer.	
	2 Recording and collecting evidence is important police work.	
	3 SOCOs analyze evidence from crime scenes.	
SOCOs are called to crime scenes at any time of the day or night, and may have to remain there for days or even weeks so that every piece of evidence is collected.	4 SOCOs have a difficult job to do.	
	5 SOCOs work regular hours.	
	6 After a crime, the SOCO's work continues until the crime is solved.	
Many SOCOs now use photographic and surveying techniques to produce virtual reconstructions of crime scenes that help with their recording and investigation of the scene.	7 SOCOs need to be able to take photographs.	
	8 After a crime, the crime is sometimes 'reconstructed' by actors.	
	9 SOCOs have to record and investigate crime scenes.	

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3 **Make a note of your starting time. Read Part 1 as fast as you can, but make sure you understand what you read. Don't stop for unknown vocabulary. Afterwards, check your understanding by answering the questions. Make a note of the time when you finish.**

Then do the same for Part 2. Check if you managed to complete Part 2 faster than Part 1.

Part 1

Crime-fighting technology: a necessity?

Crime-fighting technology is getting more sophisticated and rightly so. The police need to be equipped for the 21st century. In Britain we've already got the world's biggest DNA database. By next year, the state will have access to the genetic data of 4.25m people: one British-based person in 14. Hundreds of thousands of those on the database will never have been charged with a crime.

True or False? Most people in Britain are on the British DNA database.

Britain is also reported to have more than four million CCTV (closed circuit television) cameras. There is a continuing debate about the effectiveness of CCTV. Some evidence suggests that it is helpful in reducing shoplifting and car crime. It has also been used to successfully identify terrorists and murderers. However, many claim that better lighting is just as effective to prevent crime, and that cameras could displace crime. An internal police report said that only one crime was solved for every 1,000 cameras in London in 2007. In short, there is conflicting evidence about the effectiveness of cameras, so it is likely that the debate will continue.

True or False? CCTV has helped solve some small and large crimes.

Professor Mike Press, who has spent the past decade studying how design can contribute to crime reduction, said that, in order for CCTV to have any effect, it must be used in a targeted way.

True, False or Not Given?

Mike Press has been studying the link between design and the amount of crime for ten years.

Part 2

Most schemes that simply record city centres continually – often not being watched – do not produce results. CCTV can also have the opposite effect of that intended, by giving citizens a false sense of security and encouraging them to be careless with property and personal safety.

True or False? CCTV can make people feel safe, which can put them in more danger.

Professor Press said: 'All the evidence suggests that CCTV alone makes no positive impact on crime reduction and prevention at all. The weight of evidence would suggest the investment is more or less a waste of money unless you have lots of other things in place.' He believes that much of the increase is driven by the marketing efforts of security companies who promote the crime-reducing benefits of their products. He described it as a 'lazy approach to crime prevention' and said that authorities should instead be focusing on how to alter the environment to reduce crime.

True or False? Professor Press believes that CCTV can help reduce crime but only if there are also changes to the environment.

But in reality, this is not what is happening. Instead, police are considering using more technology in the future. Police forces have recently begun experimenting with cameras in their helmets. The footage will be stored on police computers, along with the footage from thousands of CCTV cameras and millions of pictures from number plate recognition cameras used increasingly to check up on motorists.

True, False or Not Given? The police are already using more technology than before.

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Exam tip

You should adjust your reading speed throughout the exam. When you are looking for detailed information (e.g. the writer's opinion), you will need to slow down to make sure you find the exact answer. When you are asked for more general information (e.g. matching paragraph headings), you may be able to read faster. By practising, you will find the ideal balance between reading slowly enough to understand and fast enough to finish on time.

Questions 1–8

Do the following statements agree with the information in the text? Write:

TRUE	if the text confirms the statement
FALSE	if the text contradicts the statement
NOT GIVEN	if it is impossible to know from the text

Statements:

1 The police may ask the people who are at the crime scene to wait together until they can talk to them. .....
2 SOCOs are not normally first at a crime scene. .....
3 Sometimes hair, skin cells, etc. from a SOCO are left at the crime scene, even though they wear protection to try to stop this. .....
4 Every item at a crime scene is photographed five times. .....
5 Fibres are an example of trace evidence. .....
6 If evidence is burnt, it cannot be dealt with. .....
7 A SOCOs job is to help get good evidence to court. .....
8 SOCOs may have to go to court to provide evidence. .....

Investigating a crime scene

Assessing the scene

On arrival, the police officer's first job is to carry out an initial assessment of the scene. If they are at first unsure whether or not a crime has taken place, it's best to assume that it has. Valuable time and evidence in the investigation could be lost otherwise. First they must deal with anyone at the scene needing medical help. Any other people present at the scene must be kept apart, as they may be eyewitnesses or suspects. Witnesses at crime scenes are not allowed to talk to each other. A person's perception of what happened can get distorted during conversation.

The police officer then calls for a Scene of Crime Officer (SOCO).

Preserving the scene

When the SOCO arrives at the crime scene, they put on a full protective body suit, gloves, a mask, and plastic overshoes. Without this, the SOCO's skin cells, hair, fibres, fingerprints or shoeprints could be added to the crime scene.

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Recording the scene

The SOCO must produce a permanent record of the crime scene, using detailed written notes, sketches, photographs and videos. It is essential that the original position of items at the scene is recorded. Some biological and chemical evidence may quickly deteriorate. Other evidence may be very fragile, and might be destroyed as the SOCO tries to recover it. Other evidence from the scene of crime will be sent to the forensic lab for analysis.

Photographing the scene

When photographing a crime scene, the SOCO follows four rules:

1. Photograph the whole crime scene.
2. Photograph each item at the scene before doing anything to it.
3. Add a scale and photograph the item again.
4. After collecting trace evidence from the item, or removing it for analysis, photograph the same part of the crime scene again.

The search for evidence

Any evidence at the crime scene may turn out to be important at some stage in the investigation, so it's important that the team's search is thorough and systematic.

- Some of the evidence, such as a cigarette butt, may be immediately obvious to the SOCO.
- Some of the evidence, such as fibres, may be present in very small amounts. This is called trace evidence.
- Other evidence, such as fingerprints, may be invisible to the naked eye, and special techniques are needed to reveal it.
- Some evidence may have been damaged, for example burnt. Special procedures are then needed.

Storing the evidence P2

Each item of evidence must be packaged separately, labelled and sealed before it is stored. Small items, such as hairs, fibres, glass fragments and paint, are put into plastic bags or bottles and sealed. Clothing and shoes are put into paper sacks. Evidence must be stored in secure facilities. Most types of evidence are kept in cool, dry rooms. Biological samples are refrigerated or frozen to prevent their decay.

Using the evidence in a criminal investigation

SOCOs must always use standard methods to process evidence. Only then will it provide valid information that can be used, or be admissible, in court. If fingerprint and DNA evidence are absent, incomplete or damaged, other types of evidence may be very important in solving the crime. The way in which the SOCO team searches for, collects, packages and stores such evidence is important in preserving it. Badly preserved evidence may not provide useful information for the investigation and may not be admissible in court.

Progress check

How many boxes can you tick? You should work towards being able to tick them all.

Did you ...

think about your reading speed and adjust it if necessary? ☐

focus on detail? A general topic can be mentioned but the answer can still be *Not Given* if the exact information is not in the text. ☐

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