



# Private investigators

## Cross-curricular – History The first private detective

- 1 Look at the logo above the text. What do you think the agency did every day?

---

---

- 2 Read the text and choose the correct alternative.

- 1 The first detective, Allan Pinkerton, was born in England/Scotland/America.
- 2 From 1842 he lived in England/Scotland/America.
- 3 Pinkerton's National Detective Agency investigated bank robberies/train robberies/murders at the beginning.
- 4 Pinkerton's National Detective Agency worked before the FBI/ worked with the FBI/copied the FBI.
- 5 Pinkerton's National Detective Agency was very small/small/ big.

### WORD BOOSTER

#### Match the words and definitions.

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1 gang        | a kill an important person                      |
| 2 logo        | b gave money for something                      |
| 3 paid        | c group of criminals                            |
| 4 assassinate | d walk behind somebody                          |
| 5 follow      | e symbol to represent a company or organisation |

- 3 Complete the sentences with information from the text.

- 1 Allan Pinkerton became a local hero because he helped the police to find the leader of a gang of criminals.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ because there was money and gold on trains.
- 3 The Pinkertons' usual job was to \_\_\_\_\_ and they were very good at it.
- 4 Pinkerton's National Detective Agency became famous because the Pinkertons \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ because Pinkerton's National Detective Agency had an eye for their logo.

- 4 What about you?

Who is your favourite famous detective from a book, TV series, film or cartoon? Why do you like him/her?

---

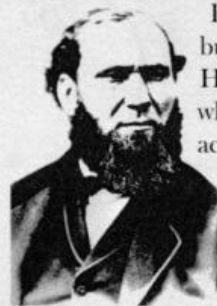
---

---

---



We all love films and books about private detectives. But who was the first private detective? In fact, his name was Allan Pinkerton and his story is as interesting as a detective novel.



Pinkerton was born in Scotland in 1819 but he went to live in America in 1842. He and his wife lived in Chicago. One day when he was walking by a river, he came across a small island. He saw that people were living there and he worked out that they were a gang of criminals.

He went and told the police and they caught all the criminals except their leader. Pinkerton helped the

police to look for the leader and he found him. Pinkerton became a local hero and the next year he became Chicago's first private detective.

In 1852 Allan Pinkerton and his brother Robert started their own detective agency. At the time, there were many train robbers because trains carried lots of money and gold. People usually paid the Pinkertons to find and catch train robbers. They were good at their job and soon criminals hated the name Pinkerton.

In 1861 the Pinkertons were investigating a train robbery when they discovered a plan to assassinate the American president, Abraham Lincoln. With this information, the Pinkertons saved Lincoln's life, and soon everybody knew about their agency, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency. In the American Civil War, Lincoln paid Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to organise a secret intelligence service. Before the creation of the FBI or the CIA in America, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency did exactly this type of work.

The Pinkertons soon had many men and women working for them. Allan Pinkerton taught them how to investigate crimes and how to follow people without them knowing about it. He was also the first person to keep a bank of information about different criminals, including their photos. On the side of Pinkerton's National Detective Agency's headquarters in Chicago they had a famous logo. It was a big black and white eye with the words 'We never sleep'. Private detectives are often called 'Private Eyes'. The Pinkerton eye was the origin of this name.