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# A Good Mystery Gets Everyone Talking

Give students a mystery to solve, a suspicious situation to investigate or a theory to challenge, and there's suddenly plenty to talk about. These activities give students a reason to ask questions, share opinions, listen to different perspectives and explain their thinking, all whilst practising their English.

That's the idea behind our new Crime & Mystery Resource Pack, which you can download completely free this month. It includes nine ready-to-use activities designed to encourage communication, creative thinking and problem solving.

We've also chosen two of our favourite activities from the pack to share with you, alongside a look at how crime and mystery feature in our English in Action courses. Our latest blog explores how investigative activities can get students speaking, and there's another Guess the Idiom challenge to work out.

Plus, we're visiting schools across Europe over the coming months, so we've included details of how you can arrange to meet us and discuss an English in Action project week at your school.

## Claim Your Crime & Mystery Resource Pack

This month, you can download our new Crime & Mystery Resource Pack completely free. Featuring nine ready-to-use activities, the pack brings together detective games, mysterious scenarios, creative challenges and discussions to get students speaking, thinking and working together in English.

**How to Claim Your Free Resource:**

Visit the EiA Shop and enter the code below at checkout, or click the button to apply it automatically. This offer is only available for a limited time.

**Your Code: ENS100CMRP26**

**Download for Free Now**

Valid until 29/11/26

# Crime & Mystery



From detective novels and crime dramas to murder mystery games and television shows, crime and mystery is a theme many students will already recognise. In the classroom, these familiar scenarios provide opportunities for students to use English in different ways. They might need to distinguish facts from assumptions, negotiate with classmates, justify a decision or construct a convincing argument. Rather than simply giving the right answer, students have to consider different possibilities and explain how they've reached their conclusions.

Our new Crime and Mystery Resource Pack puts these skills into practice through activities ranging from suspect descriptions and unusual crime scenes to conspiracy theories, questions of crime and punishment, and puzzles and games.

Further down, we've each chosen one of our favourite activities from the pack to show you how they work in the classroom.

**Download Now**

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# Course Spotlight

## Crime & Mystery in Our EiA Courses




The excitement of solving a puzzle is never far away during an EiA week! From 'Whodunnit' murder mysteries in Waystage A2 and Vantage Plus B2+ to guessing personalities from objects in Waystage Plus A2+, making deductions in Threshold Plus B1+, and cracking codes in an EiA Go Escape Room, there's always a mystery to solve!

Each activity is carefully designed to encourage teamwork, problem-solving and communication. As students work together to uncover clues, solve challenges and reach their goals, they naturally practise and develop language skills appropriate to their level of English. It's a fun and engaging way to build confidence, strengthen communication skills and discover just how rewarding learning English can be!

Interested in finding out more about our courses? Let us know and we will be in touch.

I'm Interested

## Arrange a Visit to Your School

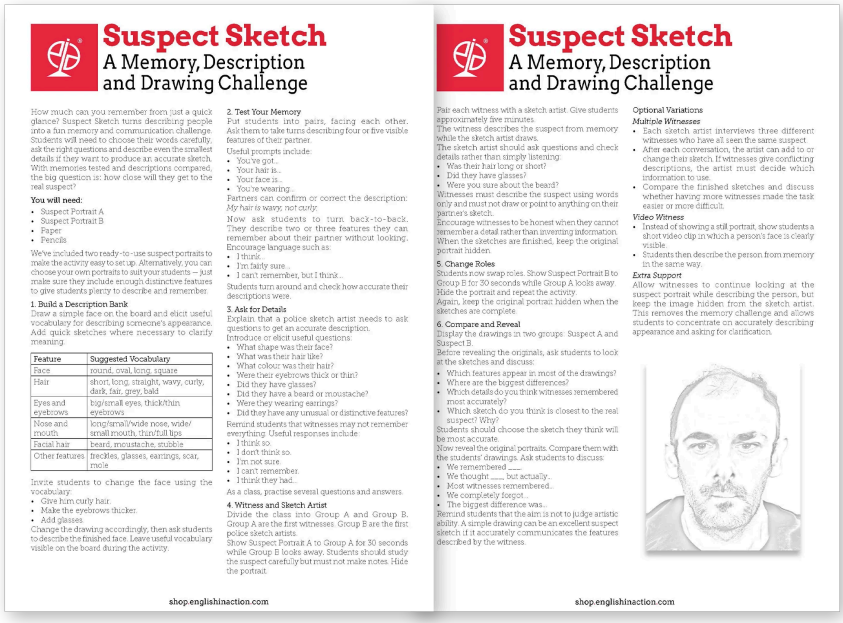
If you're considering an English in Action project week, meeting us in person is a great opportunity to ask questions, explore our course options and discuss how we could work with your school. Where possible, we can also arrange a **free demonstration lesson**, giving your students the chance to experience our interactive approach to learning English first-hand.

We'll be visiting schools across Europe over the coming months. **If you'd be interested in meeting us, please let us know**, and we'll do our best to include your school in our plans when we're in your area.

Click the button to register your interest, and we'll be in touch to discuss the possibilities.

Arrange a Visit

## Paul's Pick: Suspect Sketch




How good is your memory? And could you describe someone well enough for another person to draw them? That's the challenge in Suspect Sketch!

Students take turns playing witnesses and police sketch artists. After just 30 seconds to study a suspect's face, the witnesses must describe everything they can remember whilst their partners ask questions and attempt to recreate the suspect's appearance. No peeking allowed!

It's a brilliant way to get students talking, listening carefully and really thinking about the language they use. And when it's time to reveal the original portraits and compare the results, there are bound to be a few laughs! You certainly don't need to be a great artist to have a go at this one!

Download Resource

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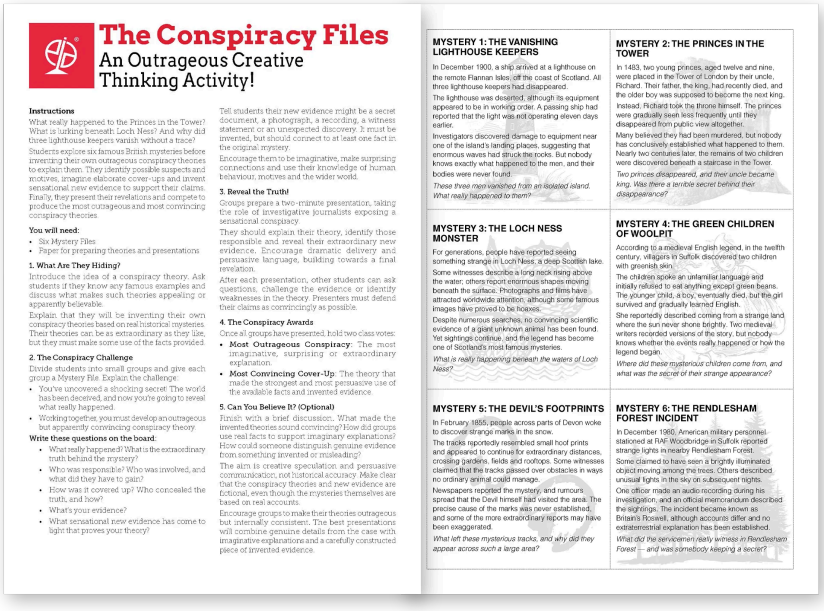
## Nick’s Pick: The Conspiracy Files



# The Conspiracy Files
An Outrageous Creative Thinking Activity!

**Instructions**

What really happened to the Princes in the Tower? What is lurking beneath Loch Ness? And why did three lighthouse keepers vanish without a trace?

Students explore six famous British mysteries before inventing their own outrageous conspiracy theories to explain them. They identify possible suspects and motives, imagine elaborate cover-ups and invent sensational new evidence to support their claims. Finally, they present their revelations and compete to produce the most outrageous and most convincing conspiracy theories.

**You will need:**

- Six Mystery Files
- Paper for preparing theories and presentations

**1. What Are They Hiding?**

Introduce the idea of a conspiracy theory. Ask students if they know any famous examples and discuss what makes such theories appealing or apparently believable.

Explain that they will be inventing their own conspiracy theories based on real historical mysteries. Their theories can be as extraordinary as they like, but they must make some use of the facts provided.

**2. The Conspiracy Challenge**

Divide students into small groups and give each group a Mystery File. Explain the challenge:

- You've uncovered a shocking secret. The world has been deceived, and now you're going to reveal what really happened.
- Working together, you must develop an outrageous but apparently convincing conspiracy theory.

**Write these questions on the board:**

- What really happened? What is the extraordinary truth behind the mystery?
- Who was responsible? Who was involved, and what did they have to gain?
- How was it covered up? Who concealed the truth, and how?
- What's your evidence?
- What sensational new evidence has come to light that proves your theory?

Tell students their new evidence might be a secret document, a photograph, a recording, a witness statement or an unexpected discovery. It must be invented, but should connect to at least one fact in the original mystery.

Encourage them to be imaginative, make surprising connections and use their knowledge of human behaviour, motives and the wider world.

**3. Reveal the Truth!**

Groups prepare a two-minute presentation, taking the role of investigative journalists exposing a sensational conspiracy.

They should explain their theory, identify those responsible and reveal their extraordinary new evidence. Encourage dramatic delivery and persuasive language, building towards a final revelation.

After each presentation, other students can ask questions, challenge the evidence or identify weaknesses in the theory. Presenters must defend their claims as convincingly as possible.

**4. The Conspiracy Awards**

Once all groups have presented, hold two class votes:

- **Most Outrageous Conspiracy**: The most imaginative, surprising or extraordinary explanation.
- **Most Convincing Cover-Up**: The theory that made the strongest and most persuasive use of the available facts and invented evidence.

**5. Can You Believe It? (Optional)**

Finish with a brief discussion. What made the invented theories sound convincing? How did groups use real facts to support imaginary explanations? How could someone distinguish genuine evidence from something invented or misleading?

The aim is creative speculation and persuasive communication, not historical accuracy. Make clear that the conspiracy theories and new evidence are fictional, even though the mysteries themselves are based on real accounts.

Encourage groups to make their theories outrageous but internally consistent. The best presentations will combine genuine details from the case with imaginative explanations and a carefully constructed piece of invented evidence.

**MYSTERY 1: THE VANISHING LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS**

In December 1900, a ship arrived at a lighthouse on the remote Flannan Isles, off the coast of Scotland. All three lighthouse keepers had disappeared.

The lighthouse was deserted, although its equipment appeared to be in working order. A passing ship had reported that the light was not operating eleven days earlier.

Investigators discovered damage to equipment near one of the island's landing places, suggesting that enormous waves had struck the rocks. But nobody knows exactly what happened to the men, and their bodies were never found.

*These three men vanished from an isolated island. What really happened to them?*

**MYSTERY 2: THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER**

In 1483, two young princes, aged twelve and nine, were placed in the Tower of London by their uncle, Richard. Their father, the king, had recently died, and the older boy was supposed to become the next king.

Instead, Richard took the throne himself. The princes were gradually seen less frequently until they disappeared from public view altogether.

Many believed they had been murdered, but nobody has conclusively established what happened to them. Nearly two centuries later, the remains of two children were discovered beneath a staircase in the Tower.

*Two princes disappeared, and their uncle became king. Was there a terrible secret behind their disappearance?*

**MYSTERY 3: THE LOCH NESS MONSTER**

For generations, people have reported seeing something strange in Loch Ness, a deep Scottish lake.

Some witnesses describe a long neck rising above the water; others report enormous shapes moving beneath the surface. Photographs and films have attracted worldwide attention, although some famous images have proved to be hoaxes.

Despite numerous searches, no convincing scientific evidence of a giant unknown animal has been found. Yet sightings continue, and the legend has become one of Scotland's most famous mysteries.

*What is really happening beneath the waters of Loch Ness?*

**MYSTERY 4: THE GREEN CHILDREN OF WOOLPIT**

According to a medieval English legend, in the twelfth century, villagers in Suffolk discovered two children with greenish skin.

The children spoke an unfamiliar language and initially refused to eat anything except green beans. The younger child, a boy, eventually died, but the girl survived and gradually learned English.

She reportedly described coming from a strange land where the sun never shone brightly. Two medieval writers recorded versions of the story, but nobody knows whether the events really happened or how the legend began.

*Where did these mysterious children come from, and what was the secret of their strange appearance?*

**MYSTERY 5: THE DEVIL'S FOOTPRINTS**

In February 1855, people across parts of Devon woke to discover strange marks in the snow.

The tracks reportedly resembled small hoof prints and appeared to continue for extraordinary distances, crossing gardens, fields and rooftops. Some witnesses claimed that the tracks passed over obstacles in ways no ordinary animal could manage.

Newspapers reported the mystery, and rumours spread that the Devil himself had visited the area. The precise cause of the marks was never established, and some of the more extraordinary reports may have been exaggerated.

*What left these mysterious tracks, and why did they appear across such a large area?*

**MYSTERY 6: THE RENDLESHAM FOREST INCIDENT**

In December 1980, American military personnel stationed at RAF Woodbridge in Suffolk reported strange lights in nearby Rendlesham Forest.

Some claimed to have seen a brightly illuminated object moving among the trees. Others described unusual lights in the sky on subsequent nights.

One officer made an audio recording during his investigation, and an official memorandum described the sightings. The incident became known as Britain's Roswell, although accounts differ and no extraterrestrial explanation has been established.

*What did the servicemen really witness in Rendlesham Forest — and was somebody keeping a secret?*

There's no shortage of unexplained events in British history, and The Conspiracy Files puts six of them to good use in the English classroom. From the disappearance of the Princes in the Tower to the Loch Ness Monster, students explore some of Britain's more enduring mysteries before developing their own imaginative explanations.

Working as investigative journalists, students construct conspiracy theories involving suspects, motives, elaborate cover-ups and newly discovered evidence, which they then present to their classmates. Alongside an introduction to British history and culture, the activity gives students opportunities to practise structuring arguments, using persuasive language, distinguishing between facts and speculation, and responding to questions and challenges. They'll also need to listen critically, identify weaknesses in other groups' theories and justify their own claims.

**Download Resource**

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# EiA Blog

## Traitor or Faithful?

*How Investigative Activities Get EFL Students Talking*



## The Traitors

The Traitors is back on British television. It has become a media phenomenon in Britain and around the world, with several versions featuring well-known celebrities. The premise is simple: a group of people live together in a secluded location and complete tasks to increase the prize fund, but three members of the main cast are secretly chosen as 'Traitors'. At the end of each day, the surviving contestants vote out someone they believe to be a Traitor. If the final three contestants are 'Faithfuls', they share the prize pot; if a Traitor reaches the final without being voted out, that player keeps all the money and the remaining Faithfuls receive nothing. The game depends on detective skills, interpersonal dynamics and deception expressed through language. The show uses a simple idea based on classroom games such as 'Wink Murder' and its more sophisticated relative, 'Werewolf', whose value teachers of English have long recognised.

## We all want to be detectives!

Part of the pleasure of reading a detective novel or watching a series on television is trying to work out what has really happened before the big reveal in the final chapter. Our students feel the same imperative. Mysteries give students a reason to communicate. Instead of speaking English simply because the teacher has instructed them to practise a particular structure, students speak because they need information, want to share a theory, disagree with somebody or think they have discovered the answer.

In this article we highlight the benefits of using mysteries and detective games in the classroom and suggest a few simple activities you could try.

Read More

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## Guess the Idiom

From suspicious characters and daring escapes to brushes with the law, crime and mystery have inspired plenty of colourful English expressions. Here are a few examples:

- **Partners in crime** – Two people who work together, often in a mischievous or humorous activity.
- **Get away with murder** – To behave badly or break the rules without facing any consequences.
- **The long arm of the law** – The power of the police and legal authorities to catch criminals, even when they try to escape.

Now take a look at the image below and see if you can guess this month's idiom. The picture shows the literal meaning, but can you work out what the expression really means?

**You'll find the answer at the end of this newsletter.**



We hope you enjoy our new Crime & Mystery Resource Pack and that it brings some interesting discussions, creative ideas and perhaps a few unexpected theories into your classroom!

If you're interested in arranging a school visit, do get in touch. We'd love the opportunity to meet more of you in person over the coming months.

Keep an eye on your inbox, as we'll be back a little earlier than usual with some Christmas resources to help you get ready for the festive season.

Until then, happy teaching!

Paul & Nick

**Guess the Idiom Answer:** *Cover your tracks* – To hide or remove evidence of your actions to prevent others from discovering what you have done.

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