



The Detectives

-Travaux Pédagogiques avancés-

We hope that you enjoyed the performance of *The Detectives* in your school. Here are some more activities and exercises on a detective theme that are designed to help you practice grammar and writing in different ways.

Exercise 1

Can you remember the story of *the Detectives*? Write a synopsis of the story in just ten minutes. Mention the three characters, Michael, Christopher, and Sylvie, the bottle of poison (medicine), jealousy, and what happened in the cabaret.

Exercise 2

Now complete this re-telling of the story. Filling in the gaps with the words and phrases below and then choose the right word when necessary.

aggressive	showing off	told her off	suspected
ashamed	stole	accused	threatened
jealous			
innocent	cheated on	personalities	
unfairly			

In February 1999 three English actors, Michael Kay, his wife Sylvie Kay and their friend Christopher O'Connell played a cabaret performance together. The three people had very different _____ ; Christopher was a natural clown, always doing silly things and _____. Sylvie was sexy and very flirtatious. She often had affairs with other men and at the time of the murder she **had/ was having** an affair with Christopher. Her husband Michael was serious and professional and completely in love with his wife. In the whole time that they were married, he **was never/ had never been** unfaithful to Sylvie, despite the fact that she had often _____ him.



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One evening all three were together in their hotel. They were quite drunk. Michael saw Sylvie actually kiss Christopher and he became very _____. He fetched the special medicine that he took for his asthma. He _____ Christopher with the bottle and told him that if he drank just four drops of the liquid inside that he **will/ would** die in just five minutes. When Christopher asked Michael **if he would/ would he** really kill him, Michael became _____ and admitted that he wouldn't; he said he had just been _____ because he was drunk.

The next afternoon, Michael had a big argument with Sylvie in their dressing room. He _____ for treating him so _____. He told her that if she didn't stop **hurting/ to hurt** him, that he would kill himself. She told him **to not be/ not to be** stupid. She told Michael that when the cabaret finished **in/ after** two days' time, that she would leave Christopher and stay with him. She didn't realise that Christopher **listened/ was listening** outside the door. What Sylvie said made Christopher very angry. He waited until Sylvie and Michael had both left the room and then he went inside and _____ Michael's poisonous medicine.

In the evening Christopher gave Sylvie the poison from a yellow glass while walking with her on the tightrope. She died five minutes later, shortly after drinking a different glass of wine with Michael. The police _____ Michael of the murder because they found poison in the glass of wine that he **gave/ had given** to Sylvie. In fact Christopher **put/ had put** some poison into that glass too in order to confuse the police. Michael was _____, but he went to prison, while Christopher escaped justice and lived happily ever after.

Exercise 3

In the following detective story you have to make sentences using modals of deduction after each section. Say what can't (possibly) be (0%), might be/ may be/ could be (30 – 60%), might well be, may well be, could well be (50 – 80%), and must be (100%).

Notice that most of the story is in the present tense so you should use the phrases above. Sometimes you will have to use the past tense though. Then you should use can't possibly have been (0%), might have been/ may have been/ could have been (30 – 60%), might well have



been, may well have been, could well have been (50 – 80%), and must have been (100%).

Section 1

Frank Tracey, private detective is sitting in his office when Mary Costello, a young woman with short dark hair, comes in. She looks very elegant, but Tracey notices that she has a rip in her short skirt.

Section 2

The girl opens her handbag and takes out a gun. She says she found the gun in her husband's desk.

Section 3

The next day Tracey sees the girl's husband, Mike Costello, in a cafe. Tracey recognises the man that the husband is talking to. The man is called Dan Brown, and is a convicted assassin.

Section 4

Tracey sits close to them and listens to their conversation. Mike Costello tells Brown that he has a job for him. He tells Brown to come to the house the next morning.

Section 5

Costello tells Brown that he must be careful. Costello doesn't want his wife to see Brown at the house.

Section 6

Tracey is back in the office when the phone rings. It is Costello's wife. She speaks quickly and is out of breath.

Section 7

She tells Tracey that she saw a man that she knows to be a convicted murderer in the house. She asks Tracey to come to the house immediately.



Section 8

Tracey goes to the house and climbs over the wall. The guard dogs are asleep on the other side of the back garden. Also a lot of new rose bushes have been planted that day.

Section 9

When he gets to the house, Frank Tracey breaks the window and goes into the sitting room. There he sees a pool of blood behind the desk. He expects to find the dead body of Mrs Mary Costello, but in fact it's her husband Mike Costello who is lying there with a bullet through his head. What could be the explanation of this?

Exercise 4

Writing exercise. Use the guide below to write your own private detective story. Either set a time limit and write the whole story yourself, or do it in the way that everybody writes one paragraph on a sheet of paper and then passes the paper on to the next person to continue the next paragraph of that story.

Paragraph 1 – A Private Investigator is alone in his office when a woman comes in. She is in danger. She wants the detective to help her. (Why? Who/ what is the danger? Make up some name for them.)

Paragraph 2 – The Private Investigator goes to a place where the people who are threatening woman are. (Where is it? Describe the place. Describe the people.) Suddenly the people see him and are angry that he is following them. They beat him up. (Describe this.)

Paragraph 3 – Back in his office the Private Investigator gets a phone call from the woman. (How is he feeling?) She warns him that she is in very great danger. She explains where he should come and what will happen to her. (Where? What?)

Paragraph 4 – The Private Investigator goes to the place that the woman told him to go to. (What happens? Finish the story).



Notes for Teachers

Exercise 1 and **exercise 4** are simple writing exercises. These are best performed either as homework or in class with a time limit so that students get used to writing spontaneously and quickly. The finished texts then provide good material for discussing mistakes. This is especially true if exercise 4 is done as suggested, with different students writing each paragraph of the story. This way it is fun to read some of the stories aloud and if you hold a text up it doesn't clearly belong to one single student.

Exercise 2 is a general exercise, which covers a range of grammar and vocabulary. Again it should be useful for pinpointing areas where your students may be weak.

In February 1999 three English actors, Michael Kay, his wife Sylvie Kay and their friend Christopher O'Connell played a cabaret performance together. The three people had very different **personalities**; Christopher was a natural clown, always doing silly things and **showing off**. Sylvie was sexy and very flirtatious. She often had affairs with other men and at the time of the murder she **was having** an affair with Christopher. Her husband Michael was serious and professional and completely in love with his wife. In the whole time that they were married, he **had never been** unfaithful to Sylvie, despite the fact that she had often **cheated on** him.

One evening all three were together in their hotel. They were quite drunk. Michael saw Sylvie actually kiss Christopher and he became very **jealous**. He fetched the special medicine that he took for his asthma. He **threatened** Christopher with the bottle and told him that if he drank just four drops of the liquid inside that he **would** die in just five minutes. When Christopher asked Michael **if he would** really kill him, Michael became **ashamed** and admitted that he wouldn't; he said he had just been **aggressive** because he was drunk.

The next afternoon, Michael had a big argument with Sylvie in their dressing room. He **told her off** for treating him so **unfairly**. He told her that if she didn't stop **hurting** him, that he would kill himself. She told him **not to be** stupid. She told Michael that when the cabaret finished **in** two days' time, that she would leave Christopher and stay with him. She didn't realise that Christopher **was listening** outside the door. What Sylvie said made Christopher very angry. He



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waited until Sylvie and Michael had both left the room and then he went inside and **stole** Michael's poisonous medicine.

In the evening Christopher gave Sylvie the poison from a yellow glass while walking with her on the tightrope. She died five minutes later, shortly after drinking a different glass of wine with Michael. The police **accused** Michael of the murder because they found poison in the glass of wine that he **gave/ had given** to Sylvie. In fact Christopher **put/ had put** some poison into that glass too in order to confuse the police. Michael was **innocent**, but he went to prison, while Christopher escaped justice and lived happily ever after.

Exercise 3 is designed purely to practice modals of deduction. After each section students should make guesses as to why things are as they are described. For example, if you are discussing why Mary's dress was ripped they may say ... 'She may have been attacked,' or 'She might think that it looks better like that.' The exercise should be fairly quick. There's not so much to say about some of the sections.

Section 9 doesn't have a 'right' answer and anything you come up with is fine. Just for interest though, the story is taken from the latest play by The Bear Educational Theatre. In this story the girl Mary shot her husband because she was in love with the assassin. The husband the 'job' that the husband talks to the assassin about is not murder, but planting rose bushes in the garden as a birthday surprise for his wife.

Exercise 4. If your class is not used to creative writing and you are worried that they might get stuck for ideas, then write these phrases on the board. The idea is that the students can use one of the phrases in their story to get over a block and then carry on.

- Then she said, "I have a secret to tell you. Listen."
- They said, "We don't like it when strangers stick their nose into our business."
- Suddenly a heavy object hit him on the back of the head.
- He put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a (gun, bottle of whiskey, mobile phoneetc.)
- The girl said, "I heard them talking. They will take me to the old factory. (... to the dark wood, etc.)