

READING AND LISTENING

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

- 1 Sherlock Holmes is probably the most famous detective in the world of English literature. What do you know about him?
 - 1 Sherlock Holmes lived in *Chicago / London / Edinburgh*.
 - 2 Stories about him first appeared in the *19th / 20th / 21st* century.
 - 3 He was helped in all his adventures by *Dr Krippen / Dr Jones / Dr Watson*.
- 2 You are going to read a Sherlock Holmes story called *The Three Students*. Look at the picture and headings. What can you guess about the story?

- 3 Read **Part 1** and answer the questions.
 - 1 Where was Sherlock Holmes staying? Why?
 - 2 Who is Hilton Soames?
 - 3 What did Mr Soames receive that afternoon?
 - 4 What was lying on the floor when he returned to his room after tea?
 - 5 Why did Mr Soames refuse to call the police?
 - 6 Who is Bannister?
 - 7 What clues did Mr Soames find?
 - 8 What does he think has happened?

- 4 Read **Part 2**. Who and what can you see in the picture? Are these sentences true (✓) or false (X)? Correct the false ones.
 - 1 The tutor's room was on the same floor as the three students.
 - 2 Holmes couldn't see into the room through the window.
 - 3 He found a clue on the carpet.
 - 4 The papers were next to the window because it was easier to read them in the light.
 - 5 Holmes found another clue in the bedroom.
 - 6 The intruder saw Mr Soames returning.
 - 7 He escaped through the study window.

- 5 Read **Part 3**. What motives did each of the students have? Who do you think copied the papers? Why? Discuss with a partner and then the class.

I think it could have been ... No, it can't have been ...

THE THREE



PART 1 ❖ Who copied the exam questions?

Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson were in one of England's most famous university towns doing some research. One evening, Holmes received a visit from an old acquaintance, Mr Hilton Soames, a tutor at one of the colleges. Mr Soames looked very nervous and agitated.

'I hope you can spare me some of your valuable time, Mr Holmes. Something very serious has happened at my college.'

Holmes was very busy. 'Why don't you call the police?' he said irritably.

'No, no that's impossible. We can't have a scandal at the college. I must explain. You see, tomorrow is the first day of the university examinations, and this afternoon I received the Greek translation papers. I put them on the desk in my room while I went to have tea with a friend. When I returned, I saw immediately that the papers had been disturbed. Indeed some were lying on the floor by the window.'

'I see,' said Holmes. 'Please continue.'

'Well, at first I thought that perhaps my servant, Bannister, was responsible because he'd been in the room after I left, but he denied touching the papers and I believe him. He is a good and honest man. I examined the room very carefully.'

'And what did you find?' asked Holmes impatiently.

'On the table by the window I found a broken pencil. Also, there was a cut, about three inches long, in the red leather top of my desk and next to it, a small lump of black mud. There were no signs of entry at the window. Please help me, Mr Holmes. Someone must have copied the exam questions. If I don't find who did it, I will have to cancel the exam and there will be a scandal.'

'We need to visit your room,' said Holmes. 'Come on, Watson.'

STUDENTS

PART 2 Looking for clues

They walked towards the tutor's room, which was on the ground floor. Holmes tried to look in through the window but he wasn't tall enough. He had to stop and stand on tiptoe. Above lived three students, one on each floor. Holmes entered the room and examined the carpet.

'Nothing,' he said. 'Let me look at the table by the window. Ah, yes, I see what might have happened. Someone took the papers from your desk over to the window table to copy them, because from there he could see when you were returning.'

'Actually, Holmes, nobody could see me. I came back through the side door.'

'Ah, so you may have surprised him and he had to leave hurriedly. Did you hear someone running away as you entered?'

'No, I didn't.'

'Interesting. So, our only clues are the cut in the leather and one small lump of black mud. Now tell me, where does that door go to?'

'My bedroom.'

'Can I examine it?'

'Yes, of course.'

Holmes followed Soames into his bedroom.

'Hello,' said Holmes. 'What's this? Another small lump of black mud, exactly like the one on the desk. Clearly your visitor came into the bedroom.'

'I don't understand. Why did he do that?'

'Well, when you came back so suddenly, he must have run into your bedroom to hide. Look at the bedroom window, it's open. That must be how he escaped.'

PART 3 The three suspects

'Now,' said Holmes, 'The three students who live above you. Are they all taking this examination?'

'Yes.'

'Tell me about them.'

'Well, on the first floor is Gilchrist, an excellent student and an athlete, he plays rugby and cricket and is particularly good at the long jump. He's hard-working but poor. His father gambled away all the family money.'

'And the second floor?'

'Daulat Ras lives there. He is from India, very quiet and hard-working, but Greek translation is his weakest subject. And finally there's Miles McLaren on the top floor. A very intelligent student, one of the best when he chooses to work – but he's been very lazy this term, he's been playing cards until late at night and I think he must be worried about this exam.'

'Now tell me,' said Holmes, 'how tall are these young men?'

'How tall? What a strange question. Erm ... I think Miles is taller than the Indian, but Gilchrist is the tallest, over six feet.'

'Ah, that's important. Now, Mr Soames. I wish you goodnight. I'll return tomorrow.'

Next morning Sherlock Holmes left his house at 6 a.m. He returned at 8 a.m. to pick up Watson and they made their way to the tutor's rooms. Mr Soames was waiting nervously for them.

Listening

6 T 11.12 Listen to Part 4. Whose ideas in exercise 5 were correct? Did you guess who copied the papers? Now answer these questions.

- 1 What was it about the culprit that made Holmes suspicious?
- 2 Where did Holmes go to solve the mystery? What did he discover there?
- 3 What was Holmes' explanation? Describe what happened.
- 4 What does Watson say to congratulate his friend? How does Holmes reply?
- 5 Why does Bannister apologize?
- 6 Why can the examinations take place?

What do you think?

- What were the cleverest parts of Holmes' investigation?
- How might the mystery be solved by detectives today?
- What methods of detection are used now which were not available 100 years ago?

Language work

- 1 Work out the meanings of the **highlighted** words from their contexts.
- 2 Here are some things that Sherlock Holmes could have said while he was working out who did it. Rewrite the sentences using the words in brackets.
 - 1 One of the students is undoubtedly the culprit. (*must*)
 - 2 I don't think Bannister did it. (*can't have*)
 - 3 The lump of mud is possibly a clue. (*could*)
 - 4 Perhaps the leather was cut by a knife. (*might have*)
 - 5 I don't think he escaped through the study window. (*can't have*)
 - 6 Perhaps the culprit is still hiding in the bedroom. (*may*)
 - 7 Maybe he jumped out of the bedroom window. (*could have*)
 - 8 I'm pretty sure that Gilchrist did it. (*must have*)

Telling the story

Tell the story round the class in your own words. Begin:

Student 1 *Sherlock Holmes was working in a university town, probably Oxford.*

Student 2 *His friend Mr Soames, who was a tutor, asked Holmes to help him because ...*

Student 3 ...