



MURDER MYSTERY



Discuss

- What makes a good murder mystery story?
- Have you ever read a detective novel or watched a crime show? Which ones?
- What clues do detectives usually look for at a crime scene?
- Would you enjoy solving a mystery yourself? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

Match the word with the correct sentence.

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Suspect | • Someone who saw the crime or has important information. |
| Evidence | • A person thought to be guilty of a crime. |
| Alibi | • Items or information that help prove who committed a crime. |
| Witness | • To question someone carefully to get information. |
| Investigate | • To carefully examine the facts to solve a case. |
| Motive | • A claim about where you were when a crime happened. |
| Deduce | • The reason why someone would commit a crime. |
| Interrogate | • To figure something out using logic and evidence. |



The Midnight Masquerade

The small coastal town of Ravens Hollow was famed for its eerie fog and the annual Midnight Masquerade Ball. On October 31st, the elite gathered at Blackwood Manor, a decaying estate owned by reclusive millionaire Victor Blackwood. Guests in lavish costumes and masks danced under flickering chandeliers, their identities cloaked.

At midnight, the lights went out. A scream shattered the air. When they flickered back on, Victor lay dead in the ballroom's centre, a silver dagger—engraved with the Blackwood family serpent crest—jutting from his chest. His mask was torn off, exposing a look of terror. The doors slammed shut, trapping everyone inside with a killer.

Detective Clara Hayes, disguised as a harlequin, stepped forward. She'd come undercover, wary of Victor's shady dealings. Now, she had a murder to unravel. The staff sealed the exits—no one could escape. She told all the witnesses not to touch the evidence.

MYSTERY

Suspects:

- **Eleanor Hartley**, Victor's niece, who'd clashed with him over her inheritance that night.
- **Dr. Felix Grant**, Victor's physician, overheard arguing about "dangerous secrets."
- **Lila March**, a journalist in a raven mask, probing Victor's alleged embezzlement.
- **The Groundskeeper**, an old man muttering that Victor "destroyed the family."

They all had motives and excuses. Clara examined the body, finding a torn note in Victor's pocket: 'Meet me at the clock tower. Midnight. -E.' She interrogated the suspects:

Comprehension

- Eleanor claimed she was in the library during the blackout; a nervous servant backed her up, giving her an alibi.
- Dr. Grant said he was in the wine cellar, but a broken wineglass and trembling hands suggested deceit.
- Lila admitted she'd planned to confront Victor but denied murder.
- The Groundskeeper, fired hours earlier, rasped, 'I didn't kill him, but his brother might've.' He also told her that secret journals were hidden in the clock tower.

Clara froze. Victor's brother, Henry, had supposedly perished in a fire decades ago. Intrigued, she headed to the clock tower to investigate. There, a hidden room held Henry's journals. The last entry read: 'Victor framed me. I'll make him pay.' Another mentioned, 'My son, Felix, will endure.'

Then, Dr. Grant emerged from the shadows. 'Henry's dead,' he sneered. 'I kept his promise.' Clara pieced it together through deduction: Dr. Felix Grant, Henry's son, had killed Victor for revenge, using the family dagger and planting the note to frame Eleanor. As he lunged, Clara disarmed him with her harlequin cane, pinning him until the police arrived. The guests shed their masks, but the true unmasking revealed the Blackwood family's dark secrets.



Questions

1. Where does the story take place, and why was Detective Clara Hayes attending the event?

2. Who is the victim, and what is his relationship to the suspects?

3. What is Eleanor Hartley's motive for possibly wanting to harm Victor Blackwood?

4. Why might Dr. Felix Grant have a reason to kill Victor Blackwood?

5. What is Lila March's connection to Victor Blackwood, and why is she at the masquerade ball?

6. What is the Groundskeeper's grievance against Victor Blackwood?

7. What does the torn note found in Victor's pocket suggest, and how does it relate to the suspects?

8. What evidence leads Clara Hayes to conclude that Dr. Felix Grant is the killer, and what is his motive?

Gerunds and infinitives are two forms of verbs that can function as nouns in sentences. Though they both come from verbs, they work differently in sentences.

What Are Gerunds?

Gerunds are verbs with **-ing** added to the end. They function as nouns in sentences.

Examples:

- 'Reading mysteries is fun.' (**Reading** is the subject)
- 'The detective enjoys **solving** difficult cases.' (**Solving** is the object)

What Are Infinitives?

Infinitives are the base form of a verb with 'to' in front. They can also function as nouns.

Examples:

- 'To investigate the crime was his job.' (**To investigate** is the subject)
- 'The witness wanted to help.' (**To help** is the object)

When to Use Gerunds:

We use gerunds after certain verbs and phrases:

- After prepositions: 'The detective is good at finding clues.'
- After certain verbs: enjoy, avoid, consider, finish, practice, suggest, recommend

Examples:

- 'The detective suggested interviewing the gardener.'
- 'The suspect avoided answering the question.'

When to Use Infinitives:

We use infinitives after certain other verbs and in certain structures:

- To show purpose: 'The detective came to solve the mystery.'
- After certain verbs: want, plan, decide, hope, agree, learn, offer, refuse

Examples:

- 'The witness agreed to testify.'
- 'The detective planned to examine the weapon.'



Verbs That Can Be Followed by Either (with different meanings):

- Remember + gerund = remember something that happened in the past
 - 'I remember seeing the suspect at the party.' (I recall this past event)
- Remember + infinitive = remember to do something in the future
 - 'I must remember to check the fingerprints.' (I need to do this later)
- Stop + gerund = end an activity
 - 'He stopped talking when the detective entered.' (He was talking, then ended it)
- Stop + infinitive = pause one activity to do another
 - 'He stopped to think about the evidence.' (He paused to consider something)

Quick Reference Table

Verb	Followed by	Example
enjoy	gerund	He enjoys solving mysteries.
want	infinitive	She wants to find the murder weapon.
avoid	gerund	The suspect avoided answering questions.
hope	infinitive	The detective hopes to solve the case soon.
consider	gerund	They considered hiring a private investigator.
decide	infinitive	She decided to examine the crime scene again.
deny	gerund	The suspect denied committing the murder.
agree	infinitive	The witness agreed to testify in court.



- If you're not sure whether to use a gerund or infinitive, check which verb comes before it.
- Some verbs can be followed by either, but the meaning might change.
- Gerunds can also follow prepositions, but infinitives cannot.

Practice I

Detective's Notebook

Imagine you're a detective writing in your notebook about a case. Complete the sentences with the correct form (gerund or infinitive) of the verbs in parentheses.

Examples:

I enjoy (solve) solving complex murder cases.

The witness agreed (testify) to testify in court tomorrow.

1. The chief inspector suggested (interview) _____ all the household staff.
2. I plan (check) _____ the victim's phone records tomorrow.
3. The suspect denied (be) _____ at the mansion on the night of the murder.
4. After (find) _____ the bloody glove, we decided (search) _____ the garden again.
5. The butler admitted (hear) _____ an argument but refused (tell) _____ us who was involved.
6. I hope (solve) _____ this case before the weekend.
7. She avoided (answer) _____ questions about her relationship with the victim.
8. The detective stopped (examine) _____ the weapon to take a phone call.



Practice II

Mystery Story Completion

Complete this murder mystery story by choosing the correct form (gerund or infinitive) of the verbs in brackets.

The Mystery at Thornfield Manor

Detective James Morgan remembers (arrive) _____ at Thornfield Manor just after midnight. The butler had reported (find) _____ Lord Blackwood's body in the library. Upon (enter) _____ the room, Morgan noticed the victim appeared (die) _____ from a blow to the head.

Morgan began (question) _____ the household staff. Miss Wells, the housekeeper, admitted (hear) _____ an argument but denied (see) _____ anyone enter the library. The gardener claimed (work) _____ outside until 8 PM, then going straight to his cottage.

Lady Blackwood seemed (be) _____ genuinely shocked. She mentioned (have) _____ dinner with guests before (retire) _____ to her room early with a headache.

After (examine) _____ the crime scene carefully, Morgan decided (focus) _____ on a small detail everyone had overlooked—a cufflink near the fireplace. This clue might help (solve) _____ the case.



Gerunds and infinitives also appear in common expressions that we use frequently in English.

Common Expressions with Gerunds:

- It's worth + gerund: 'It's worth checking the suspect's alibi again.'
- Can't help + gerund: 'I can't help thinking the butler is hiding something.'
- It's no use + gerund: 'It's no use denying you were there—we have witnesses.'
- Spend/waste time + gerund: 'The detective spent hours interviewing suspects.'
- Have difficulty/trouble + gerund: 'She had trouble remembering where she was that night.'

Common Expressions with Infinitives:

- It's + adjective + infinitive: 'It's important to preserve the crime scene.'
- Too + adjective + infinitive: 'The room was too dark to see clearly.'
- Adjective + enough + infinitive: 'The evidence is strong enough to make an arrest.'
- The first/last/only + infinitive: 'She was the first to discover the body.'
- What/where/how/when/who + infinitive: 'The detective didn't know who to suspect.'

Key Tips for Using These Expressions



- These expressions follow fixed patterns, so it's best to memorise them.
- Pay attention to the specific prepositions used with each expression.
- Practice using these expressions in conversations to help remember them.

Common Expressions Table

Expression	Form Used	Example
It's worth	gerund	It's worth examining the alibi more closely.
Can't help	gerund	I can't help wondering if he's telling the truth.
It's + adjective	infinitive	It's essential to collect all the evidence.
Too + adjective	infinitive	The case is too complicated to solve quickly.
Have difficulty	gerund	He had difficulty explaining where he was.
The first/last	infinitive	She was the last to see him alive.

Practice III



Detective's Notes

Fill in the blanks with the correct form (gerund or infinitive) of the verbs in parentheses:

1. It's worth (consider) _____ all the possible suspects carefully.
2. The detective couldn't help (notice) _____ the inconsistencies in her story.
3. It's important (preserve) _____ the fingerprints on the murder weapon.
4. The victim was the first (arrive) _____ at the dinner party that evening.
5. We had difficulty (find) _____ any witnesses to the crime.
6. The suspect was too nervous (speak) _____ clearly during questioning.
7. It's no use (lie) _____ about your whereabouts—we have security footage.
8. The evidence was strong enough (convince) _____ the jury of his guilt.

Mystery Dialogue Completion

Complete this dialogue between a detective and a witness by using the correct form (gerund or infinitive) of the verbs in brackets:

- **Detective:** I remember (see) _____ you at the mansion last night. What time did you leave?
- **Witness:** I recall (depart) _____ around 9 PM, just after dinner.
- **Detective:** And did you avoid (speak) _____ to anyone on your way out?
- **Witness:** No, but I stopped (chat) _____ with the butler briefly.
- **Detective:** It's important (tell) _____ me everything you remember. Did you notice anything unusual?
- **Witness:** I couldn't help (observe) _____ that Lord Blackwood seemed upset.
- **Detective:** Do you have any difficulty (remember) _____ what he was upset about?
- **Witness:** No, I heard him (argue) _____ with someone about missing jewels.

Practice IV

Clue Collection

You're at a crime scene gathering evidence. Write 5 sentences about what you're doing using gerunds and infinitives. Use at least 2 gerunds and 2 infinitives.

Example:

'I began to search the room carefully.'

'After examining the window, I noticed it was forced open.'

Write your own sentences below. Underline the gerunds and infinitives you use.

(Insert 5 lines for answering).

Suspect Interrogation

Imagine you're interrogating a suspect. Write a short dialogue (6-8 lines) between you and the suspect using at least 3 gerunds and 3 infinitives. Underline them in your dialogue.

Example:

Detective: "Do you remember seeing the victim yesterday?"

Suspect: "I admit to meeting him, but I deny killing him."



Write your dialogue here:

Homework

Create Your Own Murder Mystery:

1. Plot Development:

Create a simple murder mystery with:

- A victim
- A crime scene
- At least 3 suspects (each with a motive)
- A detective
- A surprise ending



2. Write Your Mystery:

Write a short story (10-15 sentences) about your murder mystery. In your story, you must:

- Use at least 4 gerunds (verbs ending in -ing used as nouns)
- Use at least 4 infinitives (to + verb)
- Use at least 2 expressions from page 8 (like "It's worth..." or "can't help...")
- Underline all the gerunds and infinitives you use

3. Create a Suspect Profile:

Draw or describe your main suspect, including:

- Their name and occupation
- Their relationship to the victim
- Their motive for the crime
- Their alibi (where they claim to be during the murder)
- One clue that either points to their guilt or innocence



Remember to make your mystery interesting and to use gerunds and infinitives correctly!

Homework

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.