

Workbook Story worksheet: *The Dancing Men*

Before you read

- 1 *The Dancing Men* is about the famous London detective, Sherlock Holmes, who has to solve a crime. In the story one of the characters receives a letter showing these 'dancing men'.



What do you think the dancing men mean? Why do you think someone is sending a message of dancing men?

- 2 Which of the following words do you think you will see in the story?

gun	theatre	frightened	inspector	computer	mystery	crime	pizza
evidence	dangerous	beach	investigation	ballet	gang	secret	

Look for the words as you read the story.

While you read

- 3 Put the sentences in the correct order (1-10).

- a) Sherlock Holmes arrives in Norfolk.
- b) Hilton Cubitt returns to see Sherlock Holmes with more dancing men messages.
- c) Hilton Cubitt and his wife are shot.
- d) Sherlock Holmes and Inspector Martin catch the criminal.
- e) Sherlock Holmes sends a telegram to America.
- f) Sherlock Holmes speaks to the servants and examines the room.
- g) Hilton Cubitt first visits Sherlock Holmes to ask for help.
- h) Abe Slaney tells his story.
- i) A dark figure draws messages on the toolhouse during the night.
- j) Abe Slaney receives a dancing men message saying 'Come here at once'.

- 4 Who did what? Match the phrases (1-8) with the characters from the story (a-h).

- | | | |
|---|-------|--------------------------|
| 1) Wanted to forget his/her past life | _____ | a) Abe Slaney |
| 2) Was head of a gang of criminals in America | | b) Elsie Cubitt's father |
| 3) Was engaged to be married to Elsie before she met Hilton Cubitt | | c) Watson |
| 4) Sent a dancing men message to Abe Slaney after the crime | | d) Elsie Cubitt |
| 5) Fired a bullet which went through the window frame | | e) Hilton Cubitt |
| 6) Was surprised that Sherlock Holmes arrived in Norfolk so quickly after the crime | | f) Sherlock Holmes |
| 7) Smelt gunpowder upstairs after the crime | | g) The Cubitts' servants |
| 8) Travelled from London to Norfolk with Sherlock Holmes | | h) Inspector Martin |

- 5 Read Abe Slaney's story and correct the false information. Refer back to the story if you need help.

Abe Slaney was a member of a gang of criminals in ^{Chicago}~~New York~~. Elsie didn't want to marry Abe, and her father sent her to England. In England, she met and married Hilton Cubitt. Abe moved to London and wrote secret messages to Elsie asking her to come away with him. She replied 'MAYBE'. Abe came to the Cubitts' house one afternoon at three o'clock, and Hilton Cubitt offered him some money and asked him to go away. Abe took the money and shot Hilton and Elsie Cubitt.

After you read

- 6 Complete the description of the crime with the words in the box.

hole killed fired missed committed bullet shoot

The crime was _____ at Ridling Thorpe Manor at three o'clock in the morning. Abe Slaney _____ a gun through the open window and _____ Mr Cubitt. At the same time, Mr Cubitt tried to _____ Abe, but he _____ and the _____ passed through the window frame, leaving a _____ in the frame.

Now cover the paragraph and try to describe the crime using the words in the box above.

- 7 Write a short article for a Norfolk newspaper explaining how Sherlock Holmes caught the criminal.

London detective, Sherlock Holmes, solves mystery at Ridling Thorpe Manor

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ANSWER KEY

Before you read

- Students' own ideas. In fact, each dancing man represents a letter of the alphabet. The messages are a type of secret writing.
- The words which are in the story are:

gun	frightened	inspector	mystery
crime	evidence	dangerous	investigation
gang	secret		

While you read

- Sherlock Holmes arrives in Norfolk. **6**
 - Hilton Cubitt returns to see Sherlock Holmes with more dancing men messages. **3**
 - Hilton Cubitt and his wife are shot. **5**
 - Sherlock Holmes and Inspector Martin catch the criminal. **9**
 - Sherlock Holmes sends a telegram to America. **4**
 - Sherlock Holmes speaks to the servants and examines the room. **7**
 - Hilton Cubitt first visits Sherlock Holmes to ask for help. **1**
 - Abe Slaney tells his story. **10**
 - A dark figure draws messages on the toolhouse during the night. **2**
 - Abe Slaney receives a dancing men message saying 'Come here at once'. **8**

- 1) d 2) b 3) a 4) f 5) e 6) h 7) g 8) c

- Corrections are underlined:

Abe Slaney was a member of a gang of criminals in Chicago. Elsie didn't want to marry Abe, and she ran away to England. In England, she met and married Hilton Cubitt. Abe moved to Norfolk/Elrige's Farm and wrote secret messages to Elsie asking her to come away with him. She replied 'NEVER'. Abe came to the Cubitts' house one morning at three o'clock and Elsie Cubitt offered him some money and asked him to go away. Abe did not take the money and shot Hilton but not Elsie Cubitt – she shot herself.

After you read

- The crime was committed at Ridling Thorpe Manor at three o'clock in the morning. Abe Slaney fired a gun through the open window and killed Mr Cubitt. At the same time, Cubitt tried to shoot Abe, but he missed and the bullet passed through the window frame, leaving a hole in the frame.
- Students' own answers