

England riots

WORKSHEET A

The rioting that broke out in England in early August began on the evening of Saturday, August 6th, in Tottenham, a district of north London.

The first trouble followed a protest by local people against the fatal shooting of a local man by armed police two days previously (most British police officers don't carry guns, but a few do). The reasons for the shooting are still unclear, although it seems that the man had a gun and the police thought he was a danger to them.

The protest, at first peaceful, turned violent when young people – mostly teenagers or in their twenties – started throwing bottles and other missiles at police cars. Later, vehicles were set on fire, store windows were smashed, and looting began. The next night, there was similar violence in a few other districts of London, and on August 8th, things got much worse when stores and police were attacked in more than ten different areas. Two people died – one of them a 68-year-old man who was attacked by a group of youths when he tried to put out a fire they had started on the street near his home.

The violence was no longer directly linked to the shooting in Tottenham: instead, it seemed that large groups of young people were just copying what they had seen there – and as more police were called in to deal with the most serious rioting, there were fewer officers to prevent looters from attacking stores in other districts.

On the night of August 9th, there was serious trouble outside London, particularly in the cities of Birmingham (where three men died; it seems they were deliberately run over by youths in a car) and Manchester. London, meanwhile, was much calmer, as the government had almost trebled the number of police officers on the streets, from 6,000 to 16,000.

Most British people were shocked and disgusted by the violence, and a debate began about its possible causes. In the media and among the public, there seems to be agreement that a minority of young people in Britain have grown up with far too little respect for the law, the police, or in fact anyone but themselves. A lack of discipline from parents and at school is seen as a major part of the problem. Many people also think unemployment and poverty (that is, the fact that most of the rioters are poorer than most British people; they are not poor in comparison with most people in the world's poorer countries) can help explain, though not excuse, the violence.

Soon after the riots ended, there were signs of a much healthier side to British society, as people in the affected districts of London got together to help clean up the streets using brooms and garbage bags. Clearly, however, it will take longer to address the social problems behind the riots than it did to sweep up the broken glass.

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WORKSHEET B

Exercise 1

Here are some simple definitions for words that appear in the text on Worksheet A. Find the words they refer to and fill in the blanks.

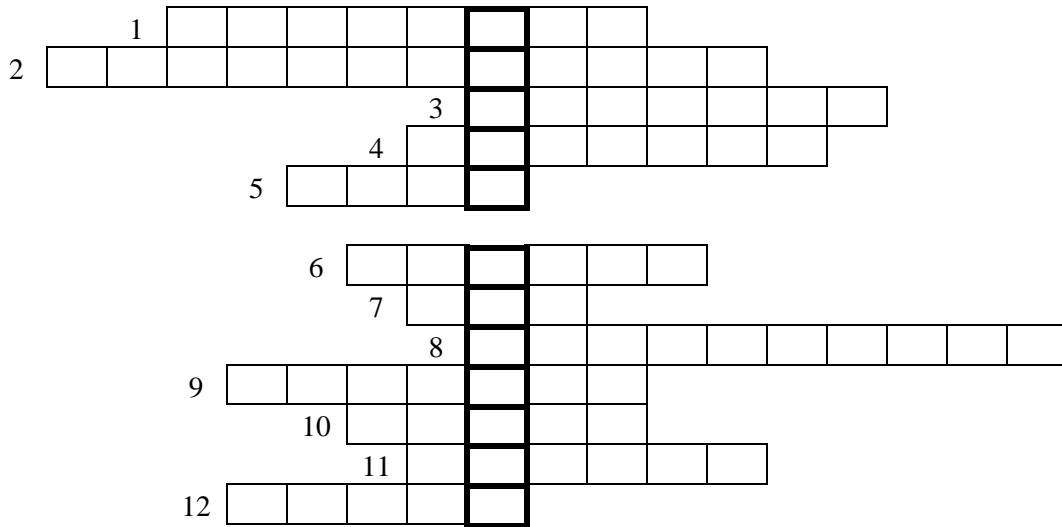
1. **p _ _ t _ _ _** (noun): something – for example a march or a public meeting – that people do to show they disagree with or are angry about something
2. **_ _ _ t** (noun): a violent protest by a large group of people
3. **l _ o _ i _ _** (noun): the stealing of things from stores or houses (usually in a violent situation such as a war or a riot, or after a natural disaster such as an earthquake)
4. **br _ _ _ _ _ t** (phrasal verb): start (usually used to describe something bad)
5. **m _ _ o _ _ _ y** (noun): a small number of people or things that are part of a larger group but different in some way from most of the group
6. **sm _ _ _** (verb): to break something noisily into many pieces by dropping or hitting it with a lot of force
7. If you **d _ _ l _ w _ t _** (phrasal verb) a problem, you do something to try to make the situation better.
8. **d _ _ g _ _ _ e _** (adjective): feeling very angry and upset about something you do not approve of
9. **_ _ oo _** (noun): a brush with a long handle
10. **tr _ _ b _ e** (noun): an unpleasant, difficult, or dangerous situation
11. **y _ _ _ h** (noun): a young person (usually a male teenager or young man)
12. If you have **r _ s _ _ _ t** (noun) for a person, you see they have good qualities and so you are polite and nice to them. If you have it for a rule, you follow that rule because you think there is a good reason for doing so.
13. **_ _ _ mp _ _ y _ _ n _** (noun): a situation in which people do not have jobs
14. **_ _ ve _ t _** (noun): a situation in which people do not have enough money, or have much less money than most other people in society
15. **d _ sc _ _ l _ _ _** (noun): the practice of making people follow rules and behave in the right way, and of punishing them if they don't
16. If there is a **_ _ ck** (noun) of something, it means you need or want it but do not have any, or enough, of it.
17. When you **_ dd _ e _ _** (verb) a problem, you think about the situation and then try to make it better.
18. **_ w _ e _** (verb): to clean the floor, the ground, or another surface using a broom
19. **_ _ n _ _ v _ r** (phrasal verb): to hit someone or something with a vehicle and drive over them
20. **_ _ _ ed** (adjective): carrying a weapon, especially a gun

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WORKSHEET C

Exercise 2

Complete the crossword below. If all the words are correct, the name of the British prime minister, who had to rush back home from his summer vacation in Italy as the riots got worse, will read from top to bottom.



1. The rioting in London began on a _____ in early August.
2. It seems that the three men who died in Birmingham were run over _____.
3. The protest in Tottenham on August 6th was not _____ at first.
4. _____ in London attacked the police on August 6th, 7th, and 8th.
5. A total of five people _____ in the rioting that took place between August 6th and 9th.
6. Many British people think unemployment and poverty can help explain the violence but do not _____ it.
7. The British media and public seem to agree that too many young people have too little respect for the _____.
8. Birmingham and _____ were two of the other British cities where there was rioting.
9. _____ stole from stores in many different districts of London.
10. On August 9th, there were almost _____ times as many police officers on the streets of London as there had been the previous night.
11. The text suggests that youths in other districts of London _____ the violence they had seen in Tottenham.
12. Local people helped _____ up the districts of London where the riots took place.