

Be Convincing! Talk Like a Detective

Commonly Used Mystery Vocabulary

Every good detective has a mental word bank of mystery terminology and commonly used phrases. How many of the words below have you heard before? How many have you used in sentences? Be the best and most convincing super sleuth you can be by learning how to work these words into your investigations.

alibi—an excuse or piece of information given by an accused person to prove that he/she was somewhere else when a crime was committed

breakthrough—a necessary piece of information or insight that helps solve a mystery

clue—an object, observation, or piece of information that helps to solve a mystery or puzzle

crime—an act that violates the law

deduce—to use logical reasoning and thinking to infer information

detective—a person who gathers information and investigates crimes

evidence—a statement, fact, or object used to prove the solution of a mystery

hunch—a feeling or a guess about something

interrogate—to ask questions or seek information from people

motive—the reason a person does something or acts in a certain way

mystery—something that is secret or unknown; a problem needing to be solved

observant—careful to look at things and note details

perpetrator—someone who is guilty of committing a crime

photographic memory—the ability to form an accurate and lasting visual memory or mental picture

plot—the arrangement of events or incidents in a story

puzzle—a game that tests someone's reasoning ability

setting—the time, place, surroundings, and circumstances in which a story takes place

sleuth—another name for a detective

suspect—a person who might have committed the crime

victim—a person who is harmed by a crime

witness—someone who saw something related to the crime



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CRACK THE CODE!

SECRET CODE

A=z B=y C=x D=w E=v F=u G=t H=s I=r J=q K=p L=o M=n
N=m O=l P=k Q=j R=i S=h T=g U=f V=e W=d X=c Y=b Z=a

Test your Super Sleuth skills! Use the Secret Code above and the clues in parenthesis next to each question to fill in the blank mystery terms. For example, if the letter in the clue is an "A," fill in the blank with a "z."

1. A _____ is a person who might have committed a crime (HFHKVXG)
2. A _____ is the arrangement of events in a story (KOLG)
3. A _____ is an act that violates the law (XIRNV)
4. _____ is another name for a detective (HOVFGS)
5. A _____ is something that is secret or unknown (NBHGVI B)
6. A _____ is someone who saw something related to the crime (DRGMVHH)
7. A _____
_____ allows a person to form an accurate and lasting visual memory or mental picture (KSLGLTIZKSRX NVNLIB)
8. An _____ is an excuse given by an accused person to show that he/she was somewhere else when a crime was committed (ZORYR)
9. A _____ is the reason that a person does something or acts in a certain way (NLGREV)
10. _____ is a person who gathers information and investigates crimes (WVGXGREV)



ANSWER KEY: 1. suspect 2. plot 3. crime 4. sleuth 5. mystery 6. witness 7. photographic memory 8. alibi 9. motive 10. detective



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