

Alibi

Grade: GESE Grade 8 (CEFR B2.2)

Time: 60 minutes

Aims

- ▶ An interactive fun activity that uses B2 language
- ▶ To give fluency practice

Skill focus:

- ▶ To practise a variety of language functions including past tenses, descriptive language and questioning strategies (for CEFR B2). Can also be used for reported speech

Resources:

- ▶ Notebooks and pens

Background

- ▶ This is based on the well-known activity Alibi. (Note: If Ts are unhappy role-playing suspects, the activity can be adjusted and suspects are eye-witnesses of the incident.)
- ▶ Tell the students that the activity will give practice of using the past simple, past perfect and past continuous, which are often tricky tenses for students. It will also give practice of question forms. You may want to spend some time reviewing these two things with the class before starting the activity. If you have a class of strong students, you may also wish to review reported speech.

Activity

1. Tell the class that there has been a serious incident and tell them what has happened. This can be an improvised crime based on the immediate environment.

Example Incidents

- ▶ Yesterday, at 12:30, someone entered the hotel car park and sprayed graffiti on the wall.
 - ▶ This morning at 08:30, someone broke the head off an ancient sculpture in the town centre.
 - ▶ Last night around 8:00pm, someone broke into my hotel room and stole my laptop.
 - ▶ Yesterday at 11:00 someone drove into my car outside the hotel, and then drove off.
2. Split the class into two - As and Bs. As are going to be Police officers, and Bs the Suspects (pre-teach this vocab if necessary).

Suspects: You need to give an alibi of what you were doing last night at 8pm.

Police: You need to interview the suspects and find out if they are lying.

3. Split the groups further into threes. Give the group As the following instructions

Suspects: Your Task:

- ▶ Create an alibi together with your group members. You were all together at the time of the incident.
- ▶ Discuss all the details of what each person was doing.
- ▶ You will be interrogated by police officers, and everyone in the group must have the same story. If there are differences in your alibis, you may be guilty!
- ▶ Remember you'll be using grammar for talking about the past (past simple, past perfect and past continuous).

4. Give the group Bs the following instructions

Police: Your Task:

- ▶ You are each going to interview three suspects, one by one.
 - ▶ The three suspects claim they were together at the time of the incident.
 - ▶ Try to find differences in their stories and then decide which person, if any, was guilty.
 - ▶ Remember you'll be using grammar for talking about the past (past simple, past perfect and past continuous).
5. After giving the above instructions, give 10 minutes for Suspects to create their 'alibi stories' and for the Police officers to note what questions they are going to ask. The Police can ask up to 10 questions.
6. Then put one group A (3 Suspects) with one group B (3 Police officers). Individually each A is interviewed by B for 3 minutes. After 3 minutes ask the pairs to change partner, and after 3 minutes change once more so that each Police officer in group B has interviewed all 3 Suspects in the A group.
7. The 3 Police in the B group then confer to discuss which Suspect in group A is guilty - this will be because their stories were not consistent, and the alibi was not real. At this stage, you can ask your students to compare the alibis they heard using reported speech.
8. Ask the B groups to explain which of the Suspects is guilty and why. If all of the Suspects' answers were consistent it could be the Police don't have the guilty party.