

Infamous British Criminals Lesson Plan

By *Louise Delahay*

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

- Ask the class What British criminals have you heard of?
- Tell them that these could be figures from history.
- Welcome all suggestions.
- Ask students to tell the class what they know about any of these criminals..

Reading Practice (10 minutes)

- Tell students they are going to read a text about four infamous British criminals.
- They should read the text quickly first and answer the question.
Did the earlier lives of the men indicate that they would later become criminals?
- Check with the class.

Answer Key: Dick Turpin – yes; the Kray Twins – to some extent; Guy Fawkes – no

- Ask students to answer the questions which follow the reading text individually.
- When they have finished compare answers as a whole class.
- Check with the answer key.

Grammar Focus (10 minutes)

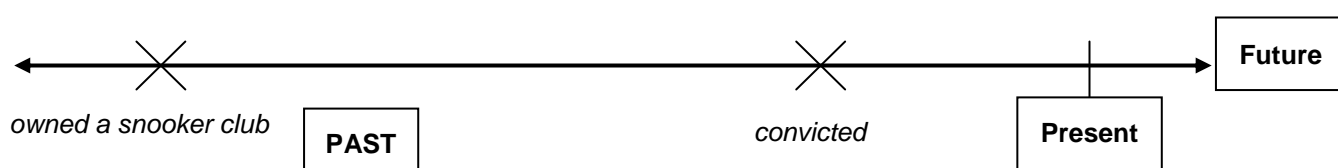
- Write the following examples on the board and ask the questions:

Prior to their conviction, the brothers had owned a snooker club.

What is the tense used?

Why this tense?

Answer: Past perfect, because it refers to an event which happened before the time in the past being described (draw this diagram for the students if it's useful)

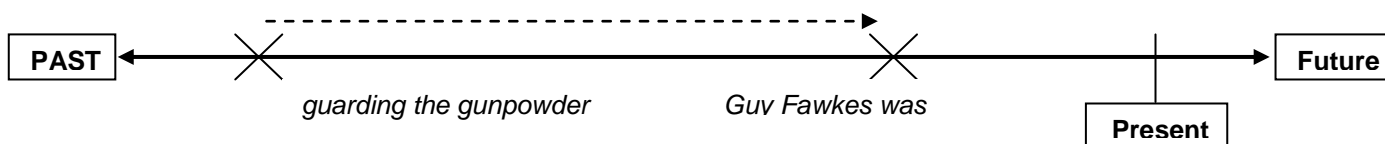


He had been guarding the gunpowder when he was discovered.

What is this tense?

Why is it used?

Answer: Past perfect continuous, because it describes a longer action which was being done up to the point in the past being described.



- Elicit the form: past perfect = *had* + past participle
past perfect continuous = *had been* + present participle (-ing)
- You can also note that sometimes, when two past events are described in the order in which they happened, the second example does not generally need to use past perfect.
- Focus on pronunciation: contractions used in speech. *I'd, he'd, they'd*, etc.

been pronounced *bin /bln/*

Practice (15 minutes)

- Ask the class to do **Criminals Worksheet 1**.
- Check answers using **Criminals Worksheet 1 Key**.

Writing Practice (25 minutes)

- Ask students to research a famous criminal from their country.
- They should then write a short biography of his/her life, including the crimes he/she committed and what he/she had done in their earlier life.

Closure (5 minutes)

- Get feedback on 'one interesting thing' students have learnt in the lesson.

Extension Activities

For more activities on crime, see Rise and Fall, Detective or Criminal?, Criminal Flashcards, Criminals Worksheet 2, Criminals Worksheet 2 Key, Opinions on Crime.

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The Kray Twins

Reggie and Ronnie Kray are probably Britain's best known gangsters. They were involved in a series of crimes including armed robbery and arson, and were finally convicted of murder in 1969. They were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Prior to their conviction, the brothers had owned a snooker club and night clubs from which they operated a string of protection rackets.

In their early lives the boys had attended a school in Brick Lane and had been praised by their teachers for being model pupils. They had ventured into amateur boxing and were called up for National Service in 1952. This life did not suit them, though. They deserted and were recaptured several times before being dishonourably discharged.

This led to the end of their boxing careers and probably contributed to their entrance into a life of crime.

Dick Turpin

The English highwayman, Dick Turpin committed the crimes of burglary, poaching, robbery, cattle rustling and murder, but after his death his life was celebrated and became the subject of ballads, films, plays and TV shows.

Turpin evaded the law for many years, but he was eventually captured in 1739 and convicted of being a horse-rustler. He was not charged with any other crimes, but a conviction for horse-rustling carried a penalty of death at the time. He was hanged.

In his earlier life, Turpin had worked as an apprentice butcher. He decided to open his own butcher's, although he stole the animals rather than buying them legitimately. He had been selling stolen lambs, sheep and cattle for some time when he was caught. He got away and joined the Gregory Gang after meeting twenty bandits from Epping Forest. King George offered a reward for their capture.

Guy Fawkes

Fawkes was infamous for his 5 November gunpowder plot of 1605. The date is now celebrated with fireworks and the making of effigies for Guy Fawkes Night.

Guy Fawkes had not in fact been the mastermind of the plot. It was the idea of Robert Catesby and was an attempt by a group of religious conspirators to kill the King, James I, and other members of the royal family by blowing up Parliament. Fawkes was caught in a cellar under the Palace of Westminster. He had been guarding the gunpowder when he was discovered and arrested. He was later executed.

Prior to the gunpowder plot, Fawkes had been a soldier. He fought in many battles and had even been given command of a company of soldiers.

Fawkes was ranked 30th in a 2002 list of 100 Greatest Britons, voted for by the British Public. He also has rivers and islands named after him.

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Answer these questions

1. Who joined a gang of bandits?
2. Whose crimes involved animals?
3. Who was not executed for their crime?
4. Who had been good children?
5. Who received praise from ordinary people?
6. Who was in the military services?
7. Who was wanted by the King?
8. Who was caught red-handed?

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Answer Key

1. Turpin
2. Turpin
3. Kray twins
4. Kray twins
5. Guy Fawkes (Greatest Britons), Krays (teachers), Dick Turpin (celebrated in popular culture)
6. Krays and Guy Fawkes
7. Turpin (and the Gregory Gang)
8. Guy Fawkes