

The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Chapter 5

Author: Daniel Barber

Level: Intermediate

Age: Young adults / Adults

Time: 45 minutes (60 with optional activity)

Aims: In this lesson, students will:

1. read short extracts from the story so far and recap;
2. listen intensively to a short passage and draw a crime scene;
3. listen to infer meaning;
4. become more aware of, and practise, verb patterns with *ask*, *say* and *tell*;
5. do a memory quiz about the whole chapter.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student; Track 1 (the first paragraph of Chapter 5) and Track 2 (the whole of Chapter 5) downloaded from onestopenglish; one copy of the full transcript per student

Summary: Sherlock Holmes and his assistant, Doctor Watson, are visited by two very important gentlemen: the Prime Minister and the Minister for Europe, Mr Hope. They want Holmes's help in an extremely delicate matter. Hope has lost a document, the existence of which, if made public, could threaten the peace and stability of Britain. In Chapter 5, things finally start to become clear to Holmes when he manages to solve a puzzle at the scene of the crime.

Reading and speaking

Aim: to recap the story so far

1. Put the students in pairs. Explain that the class is going to read three extracts from the story so far. They are the last lines from Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The students need to decide which chapter each of the lines is from. Hand out the worksheet and ask them to look at the first activity.

Key: a. Chapter 2; b. Chapter 4; c. Chapter 3

2. Now, ask students to discuss questions 1–5 below the extracts. Tell them that they don't have to write the answers. After a couple of minutes, field answers from the whole group.

Key: 1. *He is the prime minister. He has asked Holmes to find a lost letter.;*
2. *Holmes is not optimistic that he will find the letter. If the letter is made public, there is a good chance that Britain will have to go to war.;* 3. *the theft of the letter and the murder of Eduardo Lucas;* 4. *the police inspector in charge of the Lucas case;*

5. *It is where Lucas was murdered. It is the scene of the crime (see note below).*

Note: Make sure that, when you discuss the last question during feedback, you teach the phrase *the scene of the crime*. You could draw or find a picture of a chalk outline of a body in a room to illustrate the phrase.

Listening 1

Aim: to ensure that students have a mental picture in their minds of the scene and the objects and people there

1. Tell students that they are going to listen to a description of the scene of the crime. Elicit some things and people that they may see there. Ask, for example, if they think there will be a dead body there now or if they might see a television. Elicit or teach the following words: *bloodstain*, *carpet*, *floor*.

2. Tell the students that they are going to listen to the description and that, while they listen, they should paint a picture of the scene in their heads. Play Track 1.

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3. Explain that students are now going to draw the crime scene. Remind them that this is not an art class – stick men are fine, for example. Tell them that the drawing will function as a way to show that they understand what they have heard so they need to make sure it is accurate according to the description but it does not have to be beautiful. Tell them that they can represent what they have heard in any way they wish: a floorplan (like a map from above), a sketch, a series of symbols, etc. They should include objects and people. Make sure they have a pen and paper. Play Track 1 again while they draw.

4. Give the class time to compare their pictures with classmates. Then, elicit a description of the scene verbally from members of the whole class.

Key: *Their drawings and descriptions should include: the policeman at the front door; Lestrade in the front room (they may draw him looking like a bulldog!); the square carpet, covering the centre part of the floor, with a bloodstain on it; the rest of the floor covered in small wooden blocks, like parquet flooring.*

Listening 2

Aim: to infer meaning about the story

1. Explain that the class is now going to listen to the whole of the chapter and answer some comprehension questions. Tell them that, before they do, you must make sure that they understand some words. Teach them the vocabulary below. A quick way to do this is to write the words on the board, read out the definitions and ask students to give you the word.

block a solid piece of wood, stone, etc with straight sides

examine to look at something carefully

foolish not behaving in an intelligent or sensible way

faint to become suddenly unconscious for a short time and, usually, fall to the ground

public house a pub; a place where people go to have a drink

twisted bent into a shape that is not normal

Point out to the students that they don't need to write down the vocabulary because it appears in the glossary, which they will be given a copy of later in the lesson.

2. Give students a minute to read the questions in Listening 2. Tell them that they will not hear the answers to all of the questions but will have to think about them to answer fully – that is, they will have to *infer* some of the answers. Play Track 2. When it has finished, let the students compare and discuss their answers. Conduct whole-class feedback, making sure you identify that the answers to questions 3, 5, 7 and 8 are not fully given but must be inferred.

Key: *1. Lestrade wants to give Holmes a puzzle. (Also, he may want to make clear to Holmes that the murder is solved without Holmes's help.); 2. The bloodstain on the carpet is not directly above the bloodstain on the floor, indicating that the carpet has been moved. They don't understand why. 3. He says it will help Lestrade to get the confession from his policeman. In fact, Holmes wants Lestrade as far away from the front room as possible to be able to examine the room in secrecy.; 4. He finds a hiding place. Unfortunately, it is empty.; 5. He is ashamed that he let the woman in to the room.; 6. She was a pretty woman and the policeman gets lonely standing guard. He didn't think that it would cause any trouble.; 7. Ostensibly, she fainted because she saw the bloodstain on the carpet. In actual fact, she merely wanted to get the policeman as far away as possible for a short while so that she could be alone.; 8. Presumably, he shows him*

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something that identifies the woman that came in, such as a picture of her.

Language: ask, say and tell (optional)

Aim: to consolidate and practise verb patterns with *ask*, *tell* and *say*

1. Direct the students to the language activity on the worksheet. Point out the ten sentences, a–j, that are from, or about, the story and elicit that they contain three verbs that are often confused: *ask*, *say* and *tell*.

Put students into pairs. Tell them to match the verb patterns 1–7 with the examples of the patterns in sentences a–j. Explain that one of the verbs in each pattern is not possible and that they should cross it out. Give them two minutes for this.

2. Nominate individuals for whole-class feedback. Ask them what they notice about the patterns. They may notice, for example, that *say* never goes before *someone*.

Note: *Ask* is used in questions. *Ask* and *tell* can both be followed by an indirect as well as a direct object: *ask / tell someone* (indirect object) *something* (direct object). *Say* is only followed by a direct object: *say something*. *Tell* collocates with *the truth* (as well as other noun phrases such as *the time* and *a story*).

Key: 1. *say* (sentences d and h); 2. *say* (sentences e and g); 3. *say* (sentences a and i); 4. *ask* (sentence c); 5. *ask* (sentence b); 6. *say* (sentence f); 7. *say* (sentence j)

In the second part of the activity, students must complete the policeman's confession using the correct forms of the verbs they have just been studying. Check the answers with the class.

Key: 1. *tell*; 2. *asked*; 3. *told*; 4. *said*; 5. *tell*; 6. *asked*; 7. *ask / tell*

Speaking

Aims: to practise using reporting verbs more freely; to review the vocabulary and plot of Chapter 5

1. Tell the class that you are going to test their attention by seeing how much detail they can remember about the chapter they have just heard. For this reason, they need to put all their pens and papers away. Put them into teams of three to five students.

2. Explain that, to prepare for the game, they should work together to retell the chapter in as much detail as possible, omitting nothing. To help them, write the first line of the chapter on the board:

We soon arrived at Lucas's house in Godolphin Street.

Give them five minutes to reconstruct the chapter from memory collaboratively. While they do this, listen in, prompting them to report the speech and correcting any pertinent errors.

3. Tell the teams that you are going to play a game. Explain the rules:

- The first team will have a minute to recount some of the chapter, starting at the beginning. Anyone in the team can speak, adding details. Tell them that you will be awarding points for correct use of the following:

◇ reporting verbs;

◇ recently learnt vocabulary (e.g. *bloodstain*);

◇ the past perfect (from the previous lesson).

Warn the team that they should not rush through the chapter because, then, the other teams will earn points for filling in any blanks and they will lose. You're looking for quality not quantity!

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(If the team fails to listen and rushes to recount too much of the chapter, be strict and restart the game with another team, starting from the beginning of the chapter.)

- When the minute is up, you, the teacher, will award the team with a maximum of ten points, depending on accuracy and detail (or you can wait until all teams have had a turn to award the points, if you prefer).
- The other teams can then add any details that the first group may have forgotten. Award them some points for this, if they are accurate.
- The next team then has one minute to continue recounting the chapter. Award them points, as for the first team, up to a maximum of ten.
- As before, other teams can then add any additional details, earning them extra points.
- Continue until all the teams have had a turn.
- The winning team is the one with the most points when they have all finished recounting the chapter.

4. At the end of the game, congratulate the winning team and go over any errors or interesting language that cropped up during the game.

Follow-up tasks

- The students recount a conversation that they have had recently using *tell*, *say* and *ask*.
- Class members record themselves describing a scene such as a view from a window or a room in a house. They send that recording to others in the class who listen and draw the scene.

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Reading and speaking

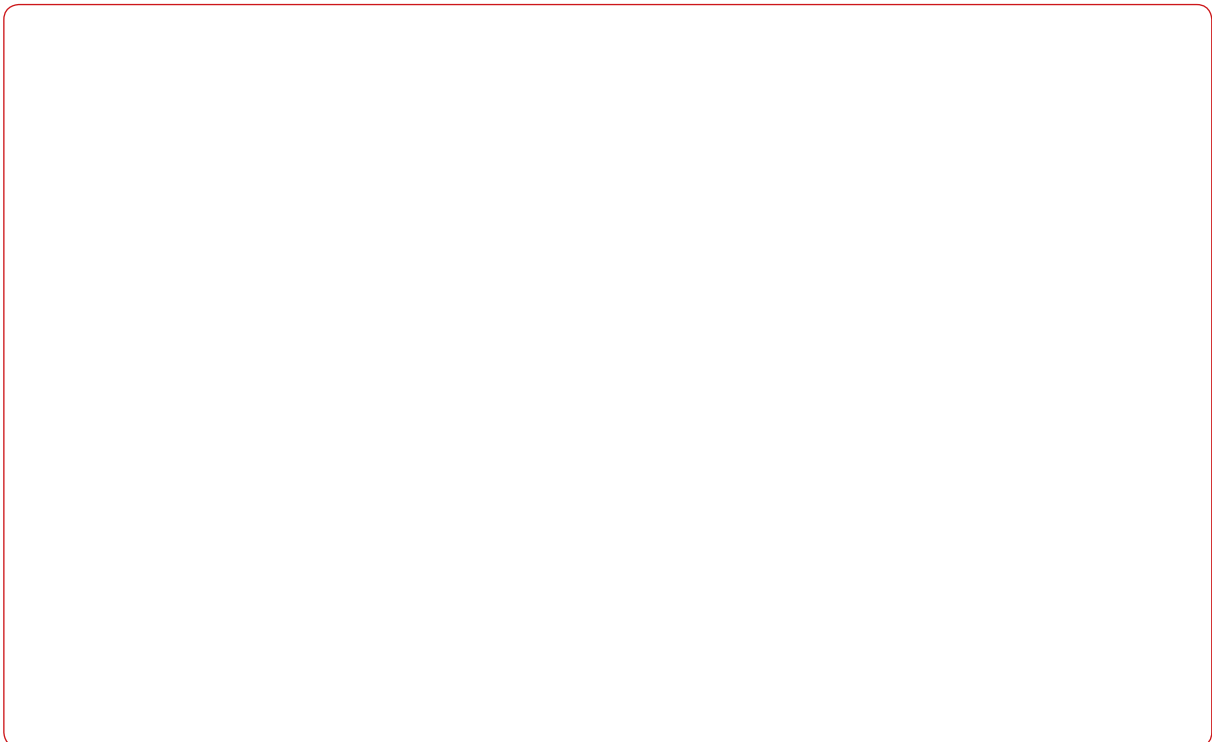
Read the last lines from Chapters 2, 3 and 4 and identify which chapter the lines are from.

- 'I will do my best for you, but I must advise you, Lord Bellinger, to get ready for war.'
- At that moment, a boy entered the room with a telegram for Holmes. 'It's from Lestrade, Watson,' Holmes said when he had read it. 'He wants me to go to Godolphin Street. Perhaps he needs our help.'
- 'Holmes,' I said, as he put on his coat. 'What is your theory? What connects the two crimes?'
'We must never make theories before we have facts, Watson,' he replied.

1. Who is Lord Bellinger? What is his role in the story?
2. Why does Holmes advise him to prepare for war?
3. What are the two crimes?
4. Who is Lestrade?
5. Why is Godolphin Street significant?

Listening 1

Listen to the beginning of the story, which describes the scene of the crime. As you listen, visualize the scene. Then, draw it.



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Listening 2

Listen to Chapter 5 and answer the questions in pairs.

1. Why has Lestrade invited Holmes to the scene of the crime?
2. What is so puzzling to the police?
3. Why does Holmes advise Lestrade to interview the policeman at the back of the house?
4. What does Holmes find?
5. Why is the policeman's face red?
6. Why did he let the woman in?
7. Why did she faint?
8. What do you think Holmes shows the policeman?

Language: *ask, say and tell*

Read sentences a–j and find examples of the structures 1–7. Cross out *one* verb in each structure that is *not possible*. The first one has been done for you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. ask / say / tell someone why/
where/when/etc something happened (or
what happened) | a. Holmes and Watson didn't tell Lestrade
about the hiding place. |
| 2. ask / say / tell someone if
something happened | b. Tell him that you know he let
someone in. |
| 3. ask / say / tell someone
about something | c. She said that she had read about it in
the newspaper. |
| 4. ask / say that something is true | d. I told her when it happened. |
| 5. ask / tell someone (that) something
is true | e. He would tell me if he saw anything. |
| 6. say / tell someone the truth | f. He won't tell you the truth if he thinks
that we will hear it too. |
| 7. ask / say someone to do something | g. Don't ask him if he let someone in. |
| | h. Ask him why he let a stranger into
this room. |
| | i. Ask him about the visitor yesterday. |
| | j. Holmes asked Lestrade to interview
the policeman. |

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Write the missing verb (*ask, say or tell*) in the correct form to complete the policeman's confession.

'All right, I'll _____ (1) you the truth. I did let someone in last night: a beautiful lady. She _____ (2) me who lived here and I _____ (3) her that there had been a murder. She _____ (4) that she knew a little about it but she wanted me to _____ (5) her more about it. She _____ (6) me if she could look at the scene of the crime. Well, when she fainted, I went to the pub to _____ (7) them to give me a glass of brandy for the lady but, when I returned, she wasn't there.'

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We soon arrived at Lucas's house in Godolphin Street. It was my first visit to the scene of the crime. There was a big policeman standing outside the front door. He let us into the house, and in the front room we found Inspector Lestrade. As usual, I thought he looked like a bulldog. The only sign of the crime in the room was a large **bloodstain** on the beautiful square carpet. This carpet covered only the centre part of the floor, which was made from small wooden **blocks**. The wood had been polished and was quite shiny.

Track 1 end

Track 1 & Track 2 start

'Have you seen the news from Paris?' Lestrade asked Holmes. 'That poor woman is obviously the killer. There's no doubt about it.'

'If you're sure about it, why do you need my help?' Holmes replied.

'Well, I don't really need your help, Mr Holmes,' said Lestrade. 'But I want to show you something. After we had received the news from Paris about Madame Fournaye, we were tidying the room this morning because our work is finished here. That's when we discovered something strange. It's a kind of puzzle and I know how much you like puzzles, Mr Holmes. Do you see the stain on the carpet? Lucas's blood has soaked through it. Now look at this!'

He pulled back the corner of the carpet nearest the large bloodstain and pointed at the wooden floor that the carpet had covered. There was no bloodstain on the wood. There was certainly blood on the underside of the carpet, and there should have been a stain on the wood it had covered. But there was no stain on the wood. Then Lestrade lifted another part of the carpet which had no bloodstain on it, and he showed us a large stain on the wooden floor beneath it. Holmes looked surprised and Lestrade laughed.

'Here's the second stain,' he said. '**What do you make of that?**'

'Well, someone must have turned the carpet round,' said Holmes.

'Yes,' Lestrade agreed, 'that's obvious. We Scotland Yard men don't need the famous detective, Mr Sherlock Holmes, to tell us that. But why, Mr Holmes? Why has someone moved it, and who was it?'

Holmes thought for a minute. I could see from his face that he had suddenly had an idea and was excited about it.

'Has the policeman at the front door been here all the time since the body was discovered, Lestrade?' he asked.

'Yes, Mr Holmes,' the inspector replied. 'Constable MacPherson has been here all week.'

'Well, this is my advice,' Holmes said. 'Interview him immediately. Ask him why he let a stranger into this room. Don't ask him if he let someone in. Tell him that you know he did, but you want to know why. Tell him he can save his career if he tells the truth. Get the whole story from him. And, Lestrade – take him to the back of the house when you interview him. He won't tell you the truth if he thinks that we will hear it too.'

As soon as Lestrade had gone, Holmes pulled the carpet to one side and got down onto the floor. He started to **examine** the wooden blocks carefully.

'We don't have much time, Watson,' he said. 'There must be a hiding place somewhere under the floor.' He searched quickly and, two minutes later, he said, 'Ah, here it is!'

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He pulled at the edge of one of the wooden blocks and carefully lifted it out. Holmes put his hand into the opening and searched it. But when he took his hand out again, it was empty.

‘It’s gone!’ he said angrily. ‘It was here, I’m sure of that, but now it’s gone. Be quick and help me put the carpet back in its place. We mustn’t tell Lestrade about this.’

We had just replaced the carpet when Lestrade came back into the room. He was followed by the policeman, whose face was red.

‘You were right, Mr Holmes,’ Lestrade said. ‘This **foolish** man did let a stranger in here. Tell them about it, MacPherson.’

‘It was a young lady, sir,’ the policeman said. ‘She came to the door yesterday evening. She said that she thought she knew someone who lived here, but that she must have got the address wrong. But when I told her that there had been a crime here, she said that she had read about it in the newspaper. She asked if she could just look into the room where it had happened. She was very curious about it. Well, sir, I get lonely here on my own and she was a very pretty young lady. I didn’t think that it would cause any trouble if I let her look into the room. So she came in, but when she saw the bloodstain on the carpet, she **fainted** and fell onto the floor.

‘I got some water for her, but she didn’t recover. So I ran to the **public house** at the corner of the street and bought some **brandy** for her. When I got back, she had gone. I’m sorry if what I did was wrong, sir.’

‘So, the woman was alone while you went to the public house?’ Holmes asked.

‘That’s right, sir,’ MacPherson replied.

‘Did you move the carpet last night?’ Holmes asked. ‘Think carefully.’

‘Well, sir, when the young lady fainted, she fell on the carpet and it moved across the polished floor,’ MacPherson said. ‘It was very **twisted** so I moved it back and straightened it. I tried to make it look tidy.’

‘And you say that your visitor was a very pretty young lady?’ Holmes asked.

‘She was beautiful, sir,’ MacPherson said. ‘She was beautiful.’

‘Well, we must go now, Watson,’ Holmes said suddenly. ‘There’s nothing we can do here and we have an important visit to make.’

Lestrade stayed in the room when we left, but the policeman came to the door with us. As we were leaving, Holmes took something out of his pocket and showed it to the man.

‘**Good heavens**, sir!’ the policeman said. ‘You must be a magician!’

And Holmes started to laugh.

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Glossary

bloodstain a mark made accidentally by blood

blocks solid pieces of wood, stone, ice, etc with straight sides

What do you make of that? an informal way of asking someone for their opinion about something

examine to look at something carefully in order to find out about it or see what it is like

foolish not behaving in an intelligent or sensible way. Someone who is foolish is a fool.

fainted became suddenly unconscious for a short time and fell to the ground

public house a pub; a place where people go to have a drink, especially in the UK and Ireland

brandy a strong drink made from wine. It was often used as medicine at the time when the stories were written.

twisted bent into a shape that is not normal

good heavens used for showing that you are very surprised