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Six shot dead in Mafia revenge killing

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16th August, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Six shot dead in Mafia revenge killing

Mafia violence spilled into the streets in Germany on Wednesday as six Italians were shot in the head and killed after a family birthday party at a pizzeria. The killings happened after the 18th birthday celebrations of one of the victims. The motive for the bloodbath is not yet known. It seems likely they are tit-for-tat shootings, part of a long-running feud between two of Italy's largest organized crime gangs. It is the first time a crime syndicate from the south of Italy has killed abroad. Police believe the assassins are based in Italy's Calabria region. They are thought to have links to criminal groups around the world and control a large part of the European drug market. Many experts consider them even more dangerous than the Sicilian Mafia.

The victims were aged between 16 and 39. They had just left the Da Bruno restaurant near Duisburg's main train station when they came under fire, a police spokesman said. A passerby told police she heard loud bangs, followed by a noise that she thought was fireworks. Thirty minutes later, police found two cars in a small street between two office buildings. Two of the victims were slumped in their seats in one of the cars. Bullet casings littered the ground. The police officer handling the investigation, Heinz Sprenger, reported to the press: "I can't tell you how many shots were fired, but it was a whole lot." He added: "All of the victims had head wounds. One was still alive when the police first arrived at the scene, but he died as paramedics tried to revive him."

WARM-UPS

1. CRIMINAL GANGS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about criminal gangs. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

violence / streets / birthday parties / pizzeria / tit-for-tat / feuds / assassins / victims / train stations / fireworks / bullets / investigations / paramedics

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. WORLD GANGS: In pairs / groups, discuss what you know about gangs in these countries. Which do you think are most dangerous?

- Italy
- Russia
- Hong Kong
- USA
- Colombia
- England
- Japan
- other _____

4. REVENGE: In pairs / groups, role play what you would do to get revenge in each of these situations:

- Someone steals your boyfriend/girlfriend
- Your classmate takes your notes without asking
- The person next door throws their rubbish in your garden
- A "friend" puts your personal details and photo all over the Internet
- Your partner cheats on you
- Your bank overcharges you by mistake and will not refund you

5. MAFIA: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the Mafia. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think the world will always have organized criminal gangs. Students B think the opposite. Change partners often. Share your findings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A Mafia gunfight in Italy saw the deaths of six people. T / F
- b. The killings happened because a man was jealous about his friend. T / F
- c. Police believe the killings will start a series of tit-for-tat murders. T / F
- d. The gang has strong ties with European pharmaceutical companies. T / F
- e. Most of the victims were middle-aged gang leaders. T / F
- f. A witness likened the sound of the gunfire to fireworks. T / F
- g. A police officer could not say how many bullets were fired. T / F
- h. All of the victims were killed on the spot, instantly. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. spilled | a. an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth |
| 2. motive | b. dealing with |
| 3. tit-for-tat | c. killers |
| 4. abroad | d. eyewitness |
| 5. assassins | e. filled |
| 6. under fire | f. overflowed |
| 7. passerby | g. overseas |
| 8. handling | h. resuscitate |
| 9. littered | i. reason |
| 10. revive | j. shot at |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mafia violence | a. feud |
| 2. The motive for the | b. in their seats |
| 3. tit-for-tat, | c. to revive him |
| 4. part of a long-running | d. bloodbath is not yet known |
| 5. thought to have links to | e. police first arrived at the scene |
| 6. The victims were | f. spilled into the streets |
| 7. A passerby | g. criminal groups around the world |
| 8. Two of the victims were slumped | h. aged between 16 and 39 |
| 9. One was still alive when the | i. shootings |
| 10. paramedics tried | j. told police she heard loud bangs |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Six shot dead in Mafia revenge killing

Mafia violence _____ into the streets in Germany on Wednesday as six Italians were shot in the head and killed after a family birthday party at a pizzeria. The _____ happened after the 18th birthday celebrations of one of the victims. The motive for the _____ is not yet known. It seems _____ they are tit-for-tat shootings, part of a long-running _____ between two of Italy's largest organized crime gangs. It is the first time a crime _____ from the south of Italy has killed _____. Police believe the assassins are based in Italy's Calabria region. They are thought to have links to criminal groups around the world and control a large part of the European drug market. Many _____ consider them even more dangerous than the Sicilian Mafia.

The _____ were aged between 16 and 39. They had just left the Da Bruno restaurant near Duisburg's main train station when they came _____ fire, a police spokesman said. A _____ told police she heard loud bangs, followed by a noise that she thought was fireworks. Thirty minutes later, police found two cars in a small street between two office buildings. Two of the victims were _____ in their seats in one of the cars. Bullet casings _____ the ground. The police officer _____ the investigation, Heinz Sprenger, reported to the press: "I can't tell you how many shots were fired, but it was a whole lot." He added: "All of the victims had head _____. One was still alive when the police first arrived at the scene, but he died as _____ tried to revive him."

killings
syndicate
experts
likely
spilled
feud
bloodbath
abroad
littered
paramedics
under
slumped
wounds
victims
handling
passerby

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Six shot dead in Mafia revenge killing

Mafia violence _____ in Germany on Wednesday as six Italians were _____ killed after a family birthday party at a pizzeria. The killings happened after the 18th birthday celebrations of one of the victims. The _____ is not yet known. It seems likely they are tit-for-tat shootings, part _____ between two of Italy's largest organized crime gangs. It is the first time a crime syndicate from the south of Italy _____. Police believe the assassins are based in Italy's Calabria region. They are thought to have links to criminal groups around the world _____ the European drug market. Many experts consider them even more dangerous than the Sicilian Mafia.

The victims were aged between 16 and 39. They _____ Da Bruno restaurant near Duisburg's main train _____. _____ fire, a police spokesman said. A passerby told police she heard loud bangs, followed _____ thought was fireworks. Thirty minutes later, police found two cars in a small street between two office buildings. Two of the victims _____ seats in one of the cars. Bullet casings littered the ground. The police _____ investigation, Heinz Sprenger, reported to the press: "I can't tell you how many shots were fired, but it was a whole lot." He added: "All of the victims had head wounds. One was still alive when the police first arrived at the scene, but he died as paramedics _____."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'blood' and 'bath'.

blood	bath
--------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• spilled• motive• likely• abroad• control• experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• main• passerby• office buildings• littered• a whole lot• revive
--	--

STUDENT MAFIA SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about THE MAFIA in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Do stories about the Mafia interest you?
- c) What do you know about the Mafia?
- d) How do you think the Mafia has continued for so long?
- e) Do you like watching movies about the Mafia and other gangs?
- f) Have you ever had a long-running feud with someone?
- g) Have you ever done something that was tit-for-tat?
- h) Do you think this shooting means the Mafia will become more active in Europe and other parts of the world?
- i) What kind of criminal gangs are there in your country?
- j) What do you think gang life is like?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What kinds of motives might the killers have for the shootings?
- c) How would you react if you were a passerby who witnessed the shootings?
- d) Do you think it would be interesting to have a job as a police officer chasing the Mafia?
- e) Have you ever witnessed gang violence?
- f) What do you know about the Mafia's code of honour?
- g) Have you ever wanted to take revenge on someone? What kind and why?
- h) Has violence ever spilled into the streets of your town?
- i) What questions would you like to ask a Mafia boss?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Six shot dead in Mafia revenge killing

Mafia violence (1) _____ into the streets in Germany on Wednesday as six Italians were shot in the head and killed after a family birthday party at a pizzeria. The (2) _____ happened after the 18th birthday celebrations of one of the victims. The motive for the (3) _____ is not yet known. It seems likely they are tit-for-tat shootings, part of a long-running (4) _____ between two of Italy's largest organized crime gangs. It is the first time a crime syndicate from the south of Italy has killed abroad. Police believe the assassins are based (5) _____ Italy's Calabria region. They are thought to have links to criminal groups around the world and control a large part of the European drug market. Many experts (6) _____ them even more dangerous than the Sicilian Mafia.

The victims were aged between 16 and 39. They (7) _____ just left the Da Bruno restaurant near Duisburg's main train station when they came (8) _____ fire, a police spokesman said. A (9) _____ told police she heard loud bangs, followed by a noise that she thought was fireworks. Thirty minutes later, police found two cars in a small street between two office buildings. Two of the victims were slumped in their seats in one of the cars. Bullet casings (10) _____ the ground. The police officer handling the investigation, Heinz Sprenger, reported to the press: "I can't tell you how many shots were fired, but it was a (11) _____ lot." He added: "All of the victims had head wounds. One was still alive when the police first arrived at the scene, but he died as paramedics tried to (12) _____ him."

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. | (a) spilling | (b) spill | (c) spilled | (d) spills |
| 2. | (a) killings | (b) killed | (c) killers | (d) kill |
| 3. | (a) blood bank | (b) bloodbath | (c) blood clot | (d) bloodsuckers |
| 4. | (a) fend | (b) fiend | (c) feudal | (d) feud |
| 5. | (a) in | (b) at | (c) with | (d) by |
| 6. | (a) considerate | (b) consider | (c) considers | (d) considering |
| 7. | (a) having | (b) has | (c) have | (d) had |
| 8. | (a) in | (b) over | (c) under | (d) on |
| 9. | (a) passerby | (b) pass out | (c) passengers | (d) password |
| 10. | (a) letter | (b) liter | (c) litter | (d) littered |
| 11. | (a) whole | (b) hole | (c) full | (d) entire |
| 12. | (a) survive | (b) revive | (c) live | (d) relive |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about The Mafia. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. GANG POSTER: Make a poster about different criminal gangs from around the world. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the Mafia and its history. Include imaginary interviews with a gang member, a police officer and a victim.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the boss of a gang. Ask him/her three questions about the gang's motives and activities. Give him/her three reasons why he/she should disband the gang. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. F c. F d. F e. F f. T g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. spilled | a. overflowed |
| 2. motive | b. reason |
| 3. tit-for-tat | c. an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth |
| 4. abroad | d. overseas |
| 5. assassins | e. killers |
| 6. under fire | f. shot at |
| 7. passerby | g. eyewitness |
| 8. handling | h. dealing with |
| 9. littered | i. filled |
| 10. revive | j. resuscitate |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mafia violence | a. spilled into the streets |
| 2. The motive for the | b. bloodbath is not yet known |
| 3. tit-for-tat, | c. shootings |
| 4. part of a long-running | d. feud |
| 5. thought to have links to | e. criminal groups around the world |
| 6. The victims were | f. aged between 16 and 39 |
| 7. A passerby | g. told police she heard loud bangs |
| 8. Two of the victims were slumped | h. in their seats |
| 9. One was still alive when the | i. police first arrived at the scene |
| 10. paramedics tried | j. to revive him |

GAP FILL:

Six shot dead in Mafia revenge killing

Mafia violence **spilled** into the streets in Germany on Wednesday as six Italians were shot in the head and killed after a family birthday party at a pizzeria. The **killings** happened after the 18th birthday celebrations of one of the victims. The motive for the **bloodbath** is not yet known. It seems **likely** they are tit-for-tat shootings, part of a long-running **feud** between two of Italy's largest organized crime gangs. It is the first time a crime **syndicate** from the south of Italy has killed **abroad**. Police believe the assassins are based in Italy's Calabria region. They are thought to have links to criminal groups around the world and control a large part of the European drug market. Many **experts** consider them even more dangerous than the Sicilian Mafia.

The **victims** were aged between 16 and 39. They had just left the Da Bruno restaurant near Duisburg's main train station when they came **under** fire, a police spokesman said. A **passerby** told police she heard loud bangs, followed by a noise that she thought was fireworks. Thirty minutes later, police found two cars in a small street between two office buildings. Two of the victims were **slumped** in their seats in one of the cars. Bullet casings **littered** the ground. The police officer **handling** the investigation, Heinz Sprenger, reported to the press: "I can't tell you how many shots were fired, but it was a whole lot." He added: "All of the victims had head **wounds**. One was still alive when the police first arrived at the scene, but he died as **paramedics** tried to revive him."

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - c 2 - a 3 - b 4 - d 5 - a 6 - b 7 - d 8 - c 9 - c 10 - d 11 - a 12 - b