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Jail possible for Russell Crowe

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8 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Jail possible for Russell Crowe

BNE: Oscar winning actor Russell Crowe is potentially facing four years in prison after throwing a telephone into the face of a New York hotel concierge. He was arrested in Manhattan on June 6 and taken to the local police station in handcuffs. The telephone hit the front desk worker in the face, "causing a laceration and substantial pain". Crowe was charged with second-degree assault and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon – the telephone.

Mr. Crowe's publicist Robin Baum denied that his client had assaulted anyone. Baum said that Crowe had asked the front desk several times to replace a faulty phone in his room but got "only attitude" from those on duty. Apparently, "words were exchanged and Crowe wound up throwing the phone against the wall." Crowe regrets that he lost his temper and insists that at no time did he assault anyone or touch any hotel employee.

Australian Crowe, star of the movie *Gladiator*, has developed a hard man image off screen. He has a history of getting into spats in public. He recently got into a brawl with his bodyguard, Mark Carroll, while filming his new movie *Cinderella Man*. Reports say he bit off a chunk of Carroll's ear, Mike Tyson style. He also came to blows with a New Zealand businessman at a trendy London restaurant last year, allegedly over a woman.

WARM-UPS

1. ANGRY: Write down the last three times you got angry about something. Why did you get angry? What did you do to quell your anger? In pairs / groups tell each other about the times you got angry. Did you consider throwing a telephone in someone's face?

2. TELEPHONE ANGER: In pairs / groups, talk about what makes you angry about telephones. Do you get just a little irritated or totally infuriated? Here are a few things to talk about:

- a. Being put on hold.
- b. Looking at your telephone bill.
- c. Someone taking a long time using a public phone.
- d. Other people talking loudly on their mobile phones.
- e. Being asked by a recorded voice to press different numbers for different services.
- f. Childish ring tones or famous classical music ring tones on mobile phones.
- g. Answering machines.
- h. The "Greensleaves" tune or other boring music while you are on hold.

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

Oscar / Hollywood actors / Russell Crowe / prison / telephones / handcuffs / substantial pain / losing your temper / fighting in public / Mike Tyson

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. STORY PREDICTION: In pairs / groups, use the words from the "CHAT" activity to predict the story in the article. Change partners and compare your stories. If you have different ideas, talk about which is likelier to be in the actual article.

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

6. RUSSELL CROWE: Talk about the man and his movies:

Master and Commander (2003), A Beautiful Mind (2001), Proof of Life (2000), Gladiator (2000), The Insider (1999), LA Confidential (1997), The Quick and the Dead (1995), Romper Stomper (1992), Proof (1991), The Crossing (1990)

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Russell Crowe may star in a new movie called "Jail". | T / F |
| b. Russell Crowe cut a hotel concierge's face with a telephone. | T / F |
| c. A telephone is a criminal weapon. | T / F |
| d. Mr. Crowe's agent admitted his client assaulted the hotel worker. | T / F |
| e. Mr. Crowe lost his temper because the hotel phones were faulty. | T / F |
| f. Crowe regrets that he lost his temper. | T / F |
| g. Crowe has a history of getting into spats in public. | T / F |
| h. Crowe bit off part of Mike Tyson's girlfriend's ear in a restaurant. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| a. facing | agent |
| b. laceration | away from the cameras |
| c. charged | cut |
| d. publicist | defective |
| e. faulty | fights |
| f. words were exchanged | looking at |
| g. off screen | exchanged punches |
| h. spats | fight |
| i. brawl | arraigned |
| j. came to blows | an argument took place |

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

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. facing | phone |
| b. causing a laceration | brawl |
| c. charged with second-degree | his temper |
| d. faulty | spats in public |
| e. words were | four years in prison |
| f. he lost | exchanged |
| g. a hard man image | blows |
| h. getting into | off screen |
| i. got into a | and substantial pain |
| j. came to | assault |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

SPOT THE MISTAKES: Half of the words in bold in each paragraph are wrong. Circle the incorrect words. Replace them with words that fit.

Jail possible for Russell Crowe

BNE: Oscar **winning** actor Russell Crowe is potentially **backing** four years in **Hollywood** after throwing a telephone into the face of a New York hotel **concierge**. He was **imprisoned** in Manhattan on June 6 and taken to the local **police** station in handcuffs. The telephone hit the front desk worker in the face, "causing a laceration and substantial **pain**". Crowe was **charged** with second-**temperature** assault and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon – the **front desk**.

Mr. Crowe's **publicist** Robin Baum denied that his client had assaulted anyone. Baum said that Crowe had asked the **back** desk several times to **replace** a faulty phone in his room but got "only attitude" from those **off** duty. Apparently, "**words** were exchanged and Crowe wound up **lifting** the phone against the wall." Crowe regrets that he **found** his temper and **insists** that at no time did he assault **anyone** or touch any **police department** employee.

Australian Crowe, **comet** of the movie *Gladiator*, has developed a **soft** man image **off** screen. He has a **physics** of getting into spats in public. He **recently** got into a brawl with his **bodyguard**, Mark Carroll, while filming his new **screenplay** *Cinderella Man*. Reports say he **bit** off a chunk of Carroll's ear, Mike Tyson style. He also came to blows with a New Zealand businessman at a **trendy** London restaurant last year, allegedly **under** a woman.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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. SPOT THE MISTAKES: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Talk about any relationships you can see between the correct and incorrect words. Change partners and see if you found the same relationships.

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

5. STUDENT TEMPER SURVEY: In pairs / groups write down questions about anger and losing your temper.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

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

- potentially
- handcuffs
- laceration
- possession
- denied
- faulty
- attitude
- insists
- off screen
- bodyguard
- came to blows
- woman

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What first entered your head when you saw this headline?
- b. Do you think Russell Crowe is a dangerous man?
- c. Do you think Russell Crowe is a bad man?
- d. Do you think Russell Crowe is a good actor?
- e. Do Hollywood actors have any extra responsibilities to behave properly in public?
- f. Should Russell Crowe go to jail for throwing the telephone?
- g. Should a court judge look at Mr. Crowe's history of violent conduct?
- h. Have you ever thrown anything across the room in anger?
- i. When was the last time you "exchanged words" in an argument?
- j. Have you ever had a fist fight in public?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. Do you like Russell Crowe?
- c. Is there a danger that he might get off because he's a star?
- d. If you hit someone with a phone and got four years in prison, but Russell Crowe gets a fine, how would you feel?
- e. If you were the hotel concierge, would you accept compensation from Mr. Crowe and not press charges, or press charges?
- f. Do you think Hollywood studios should ban Russell Crowe?
- g. Do you think this incident is a storm in a tea cup and will blow over soon to be forgotten?
- h. Do you want to watch his latest movie *Cinderella Man*?
- i. Do you have a favorite Russell Crowe movie?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

TEMPER TEMPER: How are you at controlling your anger? Do you find yourself getting angry with people a lot? Do different people make you angry every day?

1. Complete the following sentences:

I get angry with...

myself		_____.
my parents		_____.
George W. Bush	when	_____.
my boss	if	_____.
people on the train / bus	because	_____.
God	whenever	_____.
people in the street	over	_____.
car drivers	for	_____.
people from other countries		_____.
other _____		_____.

2. Talk to your partner(s) about what you wrote. Offer each other advice on how to cope with your anger in each of the situations you discuss.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Jail possible for Russell Crowe

BNE: Oscar winning actor Russell Crowe is _____ in prison after throwing a telephone into the face of a New York hotel concierge. He was arrested in Manhattan on June 6 and taken to the local police station _____. The telephone hit the front desk worker in the face, “_____ and substantial pain”. Crowe was charged with _____ and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon – the telephone.

Mr. Crowe’s publicist Robin Baum denied that _____ anyone. Baum said that Crowe had asked the front desk several times to _____ in his room but got “only attitude” from those on duty. Apparently, “_____ and Crowe wound up throwing the phone against the wall.” Crowe regrets that he lost his temper and insists _____ did he assault anyone or touch any hotel employee.

Australian Crowe, star of the movie *Gladiator*, has developed a _____. He has a history of getting into spats in public. He recently _____ with his bodyguard, Mark Carroll, while filming his new movie *Cinderella Man*. Reports say he bit off a chunk of Carroll’s ear, Mike Tyson style. He _____ with a New Zealand businessman at a trendy London restaurant last year, _____ woman.

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 on Russell Crowe's criminal proceedings. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. ANGER: Make a poster informing people the best way to cope with anger. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you have the same ideas?

4. PUNISHMENT: Imagine you are the judge in Russell Crowe's court case. Write down the punishment Mr. Crowe will receive for his actions and your reasons for giving it. State the responsibilities Mr. Crowe has as a role model and public figure. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all give similar punishments or write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| a. facing | looking at |
| b. laceration | cut |
| c. charged | arraigned |
| d. publicist | agent |
| e. faulty | defective |
| f. words were exchanged | an argument took place |
| g. off screen | away from the cameras |
| h. spats | fights |
| i. brawl | fight |
| j. came to blows | exchanged punches |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. facing | four years in prison |
| b. causing a laceration | and substantial pain |
| c. charged with second-degree | assault |
| d. faulty | phone |
| e. words were | exchanged |
| f. he lost | his temper |
| g. a hard man image | off screen |
| h. getting into | spats in public |
| i. got into a | brawl |
| j. came to | blows |

SPOT THE MISTAKES:

Jail possible for Russell Crowe

BNE: Oscar winning actor Russell Crowe is potentially **facing** four years in **prison** after throwing a telephone into the face of a New York hotel concierge. He was **arrested** in Manhattan on June 6 and taken to the local police station in handcuffs. The telephone hit the front desk worker in the face, "causing a laceration and substantial pain". Crowe was charged with second-**degree** assault and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon – the **telephone**.

Mr. Crowe's publicist Robin Baum denied that his client had assaulted anyone. Baum said that Crowe had asked the **front** desk several times to replace a faulty phone in his room but got "only attitude" from those **on** duty. Apparently, "words were exchanged and Crowe wound up **throwing** the phone against the wall." Crowe regrets that he **lost** his temper and insists that at no time did he assault anyone or touch any **hotel** employee.

Australian Crowe, **star** of the movie *Gladiator*, has developed a **hard** man image off screen. He has a **history** of getting into spats in public. He recently got into a brawl with his bodyguard, Mark Carroll, while filming his new **movie** *Cinderella Man*. Reports say he bit off a chunk of Carroll's ear, Mike Tyson style. He also came to blows with a New Zealand businessman at a trendy London restaurant last year, allegedly **over** a woman.