

www.**Breaking News English**.com

Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

The Breaking News English.com Resource Book

"1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers"

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

Tycoon avoids prison over shares scam

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0510/051028-tycoon.html>

Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading	7
Discussion	8
Speaking	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

28 October, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Tycoon avoids prison over shares scam

Japanese courts have meted out a strangely lenient sentence to a business tycoon who was once listed in Forbes magazine as the world's richest man. Yoshiaki Tsutsumi was found guilty of insider trading and falsifying his company's share records by a court in Tokyo. Presiding judge Tsutomu Tochigi said: "The impact on society of crimes by such leading Japanese companies is very serious". Judge Tochigi then proceeded to hand out a sentence wholly incommensurate with the gravity of the crime expressed in his summing up. He fined Mr. Tsutsumi a paltry \$43,000 – chicken feed to someone of his vast wealth – and sentenced him to 30 months in prison, suspended for four years. It is highly unlikely Tsutsumi will serve any of that time.

Tsutsumi's fall from grace has been swift, although he does not quite prove the adage "the bigger they are, the harder they fall," judging from his light court sentencing. The judge said he was not sent to prison because he has already been socially ostracized. Tsutsumi is the former chairman of Kokudo Corporation, the core firm of the Seibu railway group, with holdings in construction, hotels, resorts and a baseball team. He is one of Japan's most powerful industrialists and has close connections to many of the country's leading politicians. In September 2004, Tsutsumi lied about his stake in his company and fabricated hundreds of non-existent shareholders. The subsequent sale of shares from his shady dealings lined his own pockets to the tune of \$180,000,000.

WARM-UPS

1. BUSINESS PERSON: Choose a person from the world of business. You are now that person. Walk around the class meeting the other "business people". Introduce yourselves and chat about your lives, achievements, business and current projects. What do you like about the business world?

2. FAMOUS TYCOONS: Below is a list of famous tycoons. What do you know about them? Walk around the class and ask other students about them. After you have finished, sit down and share your findings. What interesting things did you find out?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Bill Gates (Microsoft) | • Mohamed Al Fayed (Harrods) |
| • Richard Branson (Virgin) | • Roman Abramovich (Chelsea FC) |
| • Anita Roddick (Body Shop) | • Martha Stewart (lifestyle guru) |
| • Hugh Hefner (Playboy) | • Yoshiaki Tsutsumi (Industrialist) |

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

Japanese courts / court sentences / leniency / tycoons / chicken feed / prison sentences / holdings / construction / industrialists / lies / shareholders / shares

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

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

5. SECRETS: What are the secrets to success? How do you become a business tycoon? In pairs / groups, talk about how important you think the following are. Rank them in order of most likely to make someone a tycoon.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ___ Coming from a rich family | ___ Being in the right place at the right time |
| ___ University education | ___ Entrepreneurial genius |
| ___ Ideas | ___ Ruthlessness |
| ___ Hard work | ___ Luck |
| ___ Ability to lie and deceive | ___ Ambition |

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think a business tycoon whose illegal actions profit him \$180,000,000 should go to prison. Students B strongly believe business leaders should not go to prison for lying about the financial affairs of their companies. Change partners often.

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 business tycoon paid a gang to help him escape from a prison. | T / F |
| b. The world's former richest man has been found guilty of fraud. | T / F |
| c. The tycoon received a hefty fine and prison sentence. | T / F |
| d. The tycoon apologized and says he now wants to feed chickens. | T / F |
| e. The tycoon proves that "the bigger they are, the harder they fall". | T / F |
| f. He avoided prison because he had already been socially ostracized. | T / F |
| g. His close connections to many leading politicians helped him in court. | T / F |
| h. His shady dealings helped him further line his own pockets. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| a. meted out | peanuts |
| b. lenient | unethical |
| c. falsifying | at odds |
| d. incommensurate | bogus |
| e. chicken feed | light |
| f. fall from grace | saying |
| g. adage | demise |
| h. ostracized | awarded |
| i. non-existent | snubbed |
| j. shady | fabricating |

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. courts have meted | grace has been swift |
| b. found guilty of insider trading and | lined his own pockets |
| c. a paltry | suspended for four years |
| d. chicken feed to | ostracized |
| e. 30 months in prison, | \$43,000 |
| f. Tsutsumi's fall from | someone of his vast wealth |
| g. the bigger they are, | non-existent shareholders |
| h. socially | out a strangely lenient sentence |
| i. fabricated hundreds of | the harder they fall |
| j. his shady dealings | falsifying his company's share records |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

WHICH WORD? Strike through the incorrect choice in each of pair of *italicized* words.

Tycoon avoids prison over shares scam

Japanese courts have *meted* / *bleated* out a strangely *lenient* / *lending* sentence to a business tycoon who was once listed in Forbes magazine as the world's richest man. Yoshiaki Tsutsumi was found guilty of *outsider* / *insider* trading and falsifying his company's share records by a court in Tokyo. *Presiding* / *Presidential* judge Tsutomu Tochigi said: "The impact on society of crimes by such leading Japanese companies is very serious". Judge Tochigi then proceeded to hand out a sentence wholly incommensurate with the *gravity* / *depravity* of the crime expressed in his summing *up* / *down*. He fined Mr. Tsutsumi a paltry \$43,000 – *peanuts* / *chicken* feed to someone of his vast wealth – and sentenced him to 30 months in prison, suspended for four years. It is highly unlikely Tsutsumi will *serve* / *service* any of that time.

Tsutsumi's fall from *grace* / *prayer* has been swift, although he does not quite prove the *bandage* / *adage*, "the bigger they are, the harder they fall," judging from his light court sentencing. The judge said he was not sent to prison because he has already been socially *pesticide* / *ostracized*. Tsutsumi is the former chairman of Kokudo Corporation, the *core* / *bore* firm of the Seibu railway group, with *holdings* / *helpings* in construction, hotels, resorts and a baseball team. He is one of Japan's most powerful industrialists and has close connections to many of the country's leading politicians. In September 2004, Tsutsumi lied about his *steak* / *stake* in his company and fabricated hundreds of non-existent shareholders. The subsequent sale of shares from his *shady* / *luminous* dealings lined his own pockets to the *tune* / *tunic* of \$180,000,000.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Tycoon avoids prison over shares scam

Japanese courts have _____ a strangely _____ sentence to a business tycoon who was once listed in Forbes magazine as the world's richest man. Yoshiaki Tsutsumi was found guilty of insider trading and _____ his company's share records by a court in Tokyo. _____ judge Tsutomu Tochigi said: "The impact on society of crimes by such leading Japanese companies is very serious". Judge Tochigi then proceeded to hand out a sentence wholly _____ with the gravity of the crime expressed in his summing up. He fined Mr. Tsutsumi a _____ \$43,000 – chicken feed to someone of his _____ wealth – and sentenced him to 30 months in prison, suspended for four years. It is highly unlikely Tsutsumi will serve any of that time.

Tsutsumi's fall from _____ has been swift, although he does not quite prove the _____ "the bigger they are, the harder they fall," judging from his light court sentencing. The judge said he was not sent to prison because he has already been socially _____. Tsutsumi is the former chairman of Kokudo Corporation, the core firm of the Seibu railway group, with _____ in construction, hotels, resorts and a baseball team. He is one of Japan's most powerful industrialists and has close connections to many of the country's _____ politicians. In September 2004, Tsutsumi lied about his stake in his company and _____ hundreds of non-existent shareholders. The subsequent sale of shares from his _____ dealings lined his own pockets to _____ \$180,000,000.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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. WHICH WORD? 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. STUDENT "FRAUD" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about business fraud and suitable punishments.

- 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:

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| • meted out | • grace |
| • insider | • adage |
| • impact | • ostracized |
| • wholly | • holdings |
| • paltry | • stake |
| • unlikely | • tune |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What are feelings towards the sentencing?
- c. What sentence would you have given Mr. Tsutsumi?
- d. Do you think rich and famous people always receive more lenient sentences?
- e. Do you think rich and famous people should receive more lenient sentences?
- f. Do you think the judge's words were contradictory to his sentencing?
- g. How do you think Mr. Tsutsumi feels about the sentencing?
- h. What sentence would Mr. Tsutsumi have received in your country?
- i. What famous fraud cases have taken place in your country?
- j. Do you prefer chicken or peanuts?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. How serious do you think insider trading and falsifying company records are?
- d. What impact does fraud have on society?
- e. Do you think fraudsters are serious criminals?
- f. Do you think the \$43,000 fine is chicken feed?
- g. Is being "socially ostracized" an acceptable basis to give a more lenient sentence?
- h. If an ordinary person committed a major fraud, do you think they would also receive such a lenient sentence?
- i. Do you agree with the adage, "the bigger they are, the harder they fall"?
- 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

FRAUD: You are part of a new committee to decide on clear sentencing rules for business fraud. In pairs / groups, write how serious you think the fraud is in the middle column and your punishments in the right hand column.

FRAUD	SERIOUSNESS	PUNISHMENT
Corporate accounting scandals		
Credit card fraud		
False advertising		
Identity theft		
Forgery of documents or signatures		
Phishing		

Change partners and compare and discuss your ideas.

Decide together on ways of protecting against or eliminating fraud.

Give a presentation on your points to the rest of the class. Vote on the best one.

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 famous frauds. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. FRAUD: Make a poster describing one kind of fraud. Describe the measures that need to be taken to eliminate it. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write similar things?

4. LETTER: You are a prisoner serving a five-year prison sentence for a relatively minor fraud. Write a letter to the presiding judge in the Tsutsumi case and tell him what you think of the suspended sentence. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. meted out	awarded
b. lenient	light
c. falsifying	fabricating
d. incommensurate	at odds
e. chicken feed	peanuts
f. fall from grace	demise
g. adage	saying
h. ostracized	snubbed
i. non-existent	bogus
j. shady	unethical

PHRASE MATCH:

a. courts have meted	out a strangely lenient sentence
b. found guilty of insider trading and	falsifying his company's share records
c. a paltry	\$43,000
d. chicken feed to	someone of his vast wealth
e. 30 months in prison,	suspended for four years
f. Tsutsumi's fall from	grace has been swift
g. the bigger they are,	the harder they fall
h. socially	ostracized
i. fabricated hundreds of	non-existent shareholders
j. his shady dealings	lined his own pockets

WHICH WORD?

Tycoon avoids prison over shares scam

Japanese courts have *meted* / ~~bleated~~ out a strangely *lenient* / ~~lending~~ sentence to a business tycoon who was once listed in Forbes magazine as the world's richest man. Yoshiaki Tsutsumi was found guilty of ~~outsider~~ / *insider* trading and falsifying his company's share records by a court in Tokyo. *Presiding* / ~~Presidential~~ judge Tsutomu Tochigi said: "The impact on society of crimes by such leading Japanese companies is very serious". Judge Tochigi then proceeded to hand out a sentence wholly incommensurate with the *gravity* / ~~depravity~~ of the crime expressed in his summing up / ~~down~~. He fined Mr. Tsutsumi a paltry \$43,000 – ~~peanuts~~ / *chicken* feed to someone of his vast wealth – and sentenced him to 30 months in prison, suspended for four years. It is highly unlikely Tsutsumi will *serve* / ~~service~~ any of that time.

Tsutsumi's fall from *grace* / ~~prayer~~ has been swift, although he does not quite prove the ~~bandage~~ / *adage*, "the bigger they are, the harder they fall," judging from his light court sentencing. The judge said he was not sent to prison because he has already been socially ~~pesticide~~ / *ostracized*. Tsutsumi is the former chairman of Kokudo Corporation, the *core* / ~~bore~~ firm of the Seibu railway group, with *holdings* / ~~helpings~~ in construction, hotels, resorts and a baseball team. He is one of Japan's most powerful industrialists and has close connections to many of the country's leading politicians. In September 2004, Tsutsumi lied about his ~~steak~~ / *stake* in his company and fabricated hundreds of non-existent shareholders. The subsequent sale of shares from his *shady* / ~~luminous~~ dealings lined his own pockets to the *tune* / ~~tunie~~ of \$180,000,000.