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U.S. child guilty of mother's murder

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4th January, 2009

THE ARTICLE

A 12-year-old boy in the United States has been found guilty of murder. The child shot and killed his mother, Sara Madrid, 34, after an argument over his chores. He cannot be named because he is still a juvenile. The court heard he was so angry that he got his mother's gun from her bedroom and shot her eight times. Ms Madrid's partner, Alfonso Munoz, witnessed the shooting. He said the boy handed him the empty gun after he had finished shooting. Munoz told the court he taught the boy how to use the weapon for emergencies and for self-defense. Local newspapers reported that Ms Madrid did not get on with her son. Her sister told the court that Madrid had a quick temper and often yelled at, scolded and slapped the boy.

The future of the boy is now in the hands of an Arizona judge, James L. Conlogue. He will sentence the 12-year-old on January the 23rd. Prosecutors want the boy to receive the same sentence as an adult. However, this is impossible under U.S. law, which states a juvenile can only be held until he becomes 18. The boy's lawyer, Sanford Edleman, argued that the boy could not be tried as an adult because he was so young. Edleman said the boy did not even understand what was going on. He said the boy did not intend to kill his mother and that he only wanted to get back at her for scolding and slapping him. The judge ruled the case should stay in the juvenile court after a psychologist said the boy had suffered physical and mental abuse from his mother.

WARM-UPS

1. CRIME: Walk around the class and talk to other students about crime. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

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

being guilty / murder / arguments / chores / shootings / emergencies / self-defense / the future / sentences / juvenile law / scolding someone / getting back at someone

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

3. 12 YEARS OLD: Are 12-year-olds criminals. With your partner(s), decide what punishments a 12-year-old should get for these crimes. Change partners and share what you heard.

Crime	Punishment
Murder	
Illegal downloads	
Stealing sweets	
Hacking	
Not paying bus fares	
Selling drugs	

4. KILLER: Students A **strongly** believe a 12-year-old should spend years in prison for murder; Students B **strongly** believe a 12-year-old cannot commit murder because they are too young to know what it is. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. WHEN I WAS 12: What do you remember about being 12? Talk about these things with your partner(s). Change partners and talk again.

- Best friends
- Being scolded
- Household chores
- Favourite TV programme
- Guns
- Parents' temper
- Sweets and candy
- Bad things

6. GUILTY: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'guilty'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. An American teenager shot and killed his own mother. | T / F |
| b. The boy shot his mother eight times with her gun. | T / F |
| c. The boy's mother taught him how to use a gun for self-defense. | T / F |
| d. The mother always treated her son with great love and kindness. | T / F |
| e. The boy has been sentenced to 23 years in prison. | T / F |
| f. US law says children can only serve a maximum of 18 years in prison. | T / F |
| g. The boy's lawyer said he was too young to understand what he did. | T / F |
| h. A psychologist said the boy was mentally and physically abused. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. argument | a. shouted at |
| 2. chores | b. youngster |
| 3. juvenile | c. attorney |
| 4. witnessed | d. get |
| 5. scolded | e. fight |
| 6. receive | f. mean |
| 7. lawyer | g. harm |
| 8. intend | h. jobs |
| 9. ruled | i. saw |
| 10. abuse | j. decided |

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

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. found guilty | a. on with her son |
| 2. an argument | b. scolding and slapping him |
| 3. use the weapon for emergencies and | c. of murder |
| 4. Ms Madrid did not get | d. hands of an Arizona judge |
| 5. Madrid had a quick | e. for self-defense |
| 6. The future of the boy is now in the | f. over his chores |
| 7. a juvenile can only be held | g. and mental abuse |
| 8. the boy did not even understand what | h. temper |
| 9. he only wanted to get back at her for | i. was going on |
| 10. the boy had suffered physical | j. until he becomes 18 |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

A 12-year-old boy in the United States has been _____ guilty of murder. The child shot and killed his mother, Sara Madrid, 34, after an argument _____ his chores. He cannot be _____ because he is still a juvenile. The court heard he was so angry that he got his mother's gun from her bedroom and shot her eight times. Ms Madrid's _____, Alfonso Munoz, witnessed the shooting. He said the boy handed him the _____ gun after he had finished shooting. Munoz told the court he taught the boy how to use the _____ for emergencies and for self-defense. Local newspapers reported that Ms Madrid did not _____ on with her son. Her sister told the court that Madrid had a quick _____ and often yelled at, scolded and slapped the boy.

weapon
named
empty
found
temper
over
partner
get

The future of the boy is now in the _____ of an Arizona judge, James L. Conlogue. He will _____ the 12-year-old on January the 23rd. Prosecutors want the boy to receive the same sentence as an adult. However, this is impossible _____ U.S. law, which states a juvenile can only be _____ until he becomes 18. The boy's lawyer, Sanford Edleman, argued that the boy could not be _____ as an adult because he was so young. Edleman said the boy did not even understand what was going on. He said the boy did not _____ to kill his mother and that he only wanted to get back at her for scolding and slapping him. The judge _____ the case should stay in the juvenile court after a psychologist said the boy had suffered physical and mental _____ from his mother.

ruled
held
sentence
intend
hands
abuse
under
tried

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

A 12-year-old boy in the United States has been _____ murder. The child shot and killed his mother, Sara Madrid, 34, after an argument _____. He cannot be named because he is still a juvenile. The court heard he was _____ got his mother's gun from her bedroom and shot her eight times. Ms Madrid's partner, Alfonso Munoz, witnessed the shooting. He said the boy _____ empty gun after he had finished shooting. Munoz _____ taught the boy how to use the weapon for emergencies and for self-defense. Local newspapers reported that Ms Madrid did _____ son. Her sister told the court that Madrid had a quick temper and often yelled at, scolded and slapped the boy.

The future of the boy is now _____ an Arizona judge, James L. Conlogue. He will sentence the 12-year-old on January the 23rd. Prosecutors want the boy to receive the same _____ adult. However, this is impossible under U.S. law, which states a juvenile can only _____ becomes 18. The boy's lawyer, Sanford Edleman, argued that the boy could not be tried as an adult because he was so young. Edleman said the boy did not even understand _____. He said the boy did not intend to kill his mother and that he only wanted to _____ scolding and slapping him. The judge ruled the case should stay in the juvenile court after a psychologist said the boy had suffered physical _____ from his mother.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

guilty	murder

- 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 how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• found• chores• still• empty• self• quick	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hands• sentence• 18• intend• get back• abuse
---	---

STUDENT JUVENILE CRIME SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about juvenile crime 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.

JUVENILE CRIME DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'juvenile'?
- c) Do you think the boy in the story should be charged with murder?
- d) What kind of punishment do you think he should get?
- e) From what age do you think children know they are committing a crime?
- f) What kind of childhood do you think makes a 12-year-old shoot his own mother eight times?
- g) What kinds of juvenile crime are there in your country?
- h) Do you think it's sensible to teach a 12-year-old how to use a gun?
- i) How can society make parents better?
- j) What's the angriest you've ever been?

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JUVENILE CRIME DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What adjectives would you use to describe the boy's life and why?
- c) Do you think children are becoming less innocent?
- d) Do you think it's right that the boy will be released when he's 18?
- e) Do you believe the boy's lawyer who said the boy didn't know what was going on?
- f) What do you think is the best way to deal with this boy?
- g) Do you think influences like movies and video games make kids more violent?
- h) Do you think guns should be banned?
- i) Do you have a quick temper?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the boy?

LANGUAGE

A 12-year-old boy in the United States has been (1) _____ guilty of murder. The child shot and killed his mother, Sara Madrid, 34, after an argument (2) _____ his chores. He cannot be named because he is still a juvenile. The court heard he was so angry that he got his mother's gun from her bedroom and (3) _____ her eight times. Ms Madrid's partner, Alfonso Munoz, witnessed the shooting. He said the boy (4) _____ him the empty gun after he had finished shooting. Munoz told the court he taught the boy how to use the weapon for emergencies and for self-defense. (5) _____ newspapers reported that Ms Madrid did not get on with her son. Her sister told the court that Madrid had a (6) _____ temper and often yelled at, scolded and slapped the boy.

The future of the boy is now in the (7) _____ of an Arizona judge, James L. Conlogue. He will sentence the 12-year-old on January the 23rd. Prosecutors want the boy to (8) _____ the same sentence as an adult. However, this is impossible under U.S. law, which states a juvenile can only be (9) _____ until he becomes 18. The boy's lawyer, Sanford Edleman, argued that the boy could not be tried (10) _____ an adult because he was so young. Edleman said the boy did not even understand what was going on. He said the boy did not intend to kill his mother and that he only wanted to get (11) _____ at her for scolding and slapping him. The judge ruled the case should stay in the juvenile court after a psychologist said the boy had suffered physical and mental (12) _____ from his mother.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) finder | (b) finding | (c) finds | (d) found |
| 2. | (a) over | (b) on top of | (c) above | (d) on |
| 3. | (a) shooting | (b) shot | (c) shoots | (d) shootout |
| 4. | (a) footed | (b) shouldered | (c) headed | (d) handed |
| 5. | (a) Locally | (b) Locale | (c) Local | (d) Locality |
| 6. | (a) quickest | (b) quick | (c) quickly | (d) quickness |
| 7. | (a) heart | (b) feet | (c) head | (d) hands |
| 8. | (a) receive | (b) receipt | (c) receiver | (d) receiving |
| 9. | (a) holding | (b) held | (c) holder | (d) holds |
| 10. | (a) was | (b) has | (c) is | (d) as |
| 11. | (a) top | (b) front | (c) back | (d) bottom |
| 12. | (a) abuse | (b) abusive | (c) abusing | (d) abuser |

WRITING:

Write about **juvenile crime** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

[illegible]

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 out more about this story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. JUVENILE CRIME: Make a poster about juvenile crime around the world. What are different countries doing about it? Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. ADULT: Write a magazine article about the age at which children can be guilty of murder. Include imaginary interviews with one judge who believes 18 is the correct age and another who believes a 10-year-old can be found guilty of murder.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. DIALOGUE: Write an imaginary conversation between a child who is really angry at having to do household chores and a parent who insists the chores must be done.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s). Role play your conversation in front of the class.

6. LETTER: Write a letter to the judge. Ask him three questions about his decision. Give him three suggestions on what he can do to help the boy have a future. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. argument | a. fight |
| 2. chores | b. jobs |
| 3. juvenile | c. youngster |
| 4. witnessed | d. saw |
| 5. scolded | e. shouted at |
| 6. receive | f. get |
| 7. lawyer | g. attorney |
| 8. intend | h. mean |
| 9. ruled | i. decided |
| 10. abuse | j. harm |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. found guilty | a. of murder |
| 2. an argument | b. over his chores |
| 3. use the weapon for emergencies and | c. for self-defense |
| 4. Ms Madrid did not get | d. on with her son |
| 5. Madrid had a quick | e. temper |
| 6. The future of the boy is now in the | f. hands of an Arizona judge |
| 7. a juvenile can only be held | g. until he becomes 18 |
| 8. the boy did not even understand what | h. was going on |
| 9. he only wanted to get back at her for | i. scolding and slapping him |
| 10. the boy had suffered physical | j. and mental abuse |

GAP FILL:

U.S. child guilty of mother's murder

A 12-year-old boy in the United States has been **found** guilty of murder. The child shot and killed his mother, Sara Madrid, 34, after an argument **over** his chores. He cannot be **named** because he is still a juvenile. The court heard he was so angry that he got his mother's gun from her bedroom and shot her eight times. Ms Madrid's **partner**, Alfonso Munoz, witnessed the shooting. He said the boy handed him the **empty** gun after he had finished shooting. Munoz told the court he taught the boy how to use the **weapon** for emergencies and for self-defense. Local newspapers reported that Ms Madrid did not **get** on with her son. Her sister told the court that Madrid had a quick **temper** and often yelled at, scolded and slapped the boy.

The future of the boy is now in the **hands** of an Arizona judge, James L. Conlogue. He will **sentence** the 12-year-old on January the 23rd. Prosecutors want the boy to receive the same sentence as an adult. However, this is impossible **under** U.S. law, which states a juvenile can only be **held** until he becomes 18. The boy's lawyer, Sanford Edleman, argued that the boy could not be **tried** as an adult because he was so young. Edleman said the boy did not even understand what was going on. He said the boy did not **intend** to kill his mother and that he only wanted to get back at her for scolding and slapping him. The judge **ruled** the case should stay in the juvenile court after a psychologist said the boy had suffered physical and mental **abuse** from his mother.

LANGUAGE WORK

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