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**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**  
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## **John Lennon's killer says why he did it**

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

### **Contents**

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

The man who killed former Beatle John Lennon has told prison authorities why he did it. Mark David Chapman, 55, explained his reasons to his parole board on September 7th. It is the first time he has given any explanation for murdering Lennon on the steps of the rock legend's apartment in New York on December 8th, 1980. He said: "I felt that by killing John Lennon I would become somebody, and instead of that I became a murderer and murderers are not somebodies." He added: "I made a horrible decision to end another human being's life for reasons of selfishness, and that was my decision at that time." Chapman thought that by killing someone famous he would achieve "instant notoriety and fame."

Chapman is serving a sentence of 20 years to life for shooting Lennon. He was first eligible for parole in 2000 but prison officials decided not to release him. His next parole hearing will be in August 2012. He hopes that talking about his crime will help him get released. He revealed that his deepening belief in God while in prison has made him a better person. He admitted that he understands why members of the public want to keep him locked up forever. Another new revelation is that Chapman had other famous people on his hit list, including actress Elizabeth Taylor and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan. He chose John Lennon because he was "more accessible". He said: "I found out what building he was at and went there."

# WARM-UPS

**1. JOHN LENNON:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about John Lennon. Change partners often. Sit with your first 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.

*former / the Beatles / prison authorities / explanation / rock legend / notoriety / fame / parole / crime / belief in God / being a better person / locked up / hit list / accessible*

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

**3. BEING SOMEBODY:** How could you do it? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Instant fame	What could you do?	Problems doing it?
Using English		
Online		
In your town		
In your school		
Worldwide		
With your peers		

**4. LIFE:** Students A **strongly** believe when criminals get life in prison, they should stay there until they die; Students B **strongly** believe life should just mean 'a long time'. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. SELFISHNESS:** Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most selfish at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- Keeping the remote control
- Never lending things to friends
- Not listening to friends' problems
- Not helping to tidy/clean
- Talking about "Me, me, me"
- Not doing favors for helpful friends
- Taking the last piece of cake
- Having a bad mood when others are happy

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

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

## 1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. John Lennon's killer confessed to a former Beatle why he killed John.   | T / F |
| b. The killer has told other people his reasons for killing Lennon before. | T / F |
| c. Chapman (the killer) killed so he could be somebody.                    | T / F |
| d. Chapman admitted his crime was an act of selfishness.                   | T / F |
| e. Chapman will never be released from prison.                             | T / F |
| f. Chapman said his belief in God became much deeper in prison.            | T / F |
| g. He is surprised that people want him to stay in prison until he dies.   | T / F |
| h. John Lennon was top of a list of several people Chapman wanted to kill. | T / F |

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

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. former      | a. announcement |
| 2. authorities | b. superstar    |
| 3. legend      | c. infamy       |
| 4. somebody    | d. reachable    |
| 5. notoriety   | e. entitled     |
| 6. serving     | f. ex-          |
| 7. eligible    | g. VIP          |
| 8. belief      | h. carrying out |
| 9. revelation  | i. faith        |
| 10. accessible | j. officials    |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The man who killed former          | a. not somebodies     |
| 2. It is the first time he has given  | b. up forever         |
| 3. murderers are                      | c. 20 years to life   |
| 4. I made a                           | d. Beatle John Lennon |
| 5. achieve instant notoriety          | e. any explanation    |
| 6. serving a sentence of              | f. belief in God      |
| 7. prison officials decided not       | g. his hit list       |
| 8. his deepening                      | h. and fame           |
| 9. the public want to keep him locked | i. horrible decision  |
| 10. other famous people on            | j. to release him     |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

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

The man who killed former Beatle John Lennon has told prison \_\_\_\_\_ why he did it. Mark David Chapman, 55, explained his reasons to his parole \_\_\_\_\_ on September 7th. It is the first time he has given \_\_\_\_\_ explanation for murdering Lennon on the steps of the \_\_\_\_\_ legend's apartment in New York on December 8th, 1980. He said: "I felt that by killing John Lennon I would become somebody, and \_\_\_\_\_ of that I became a murderer and murderers are not somebodies." He added: "I made a horrible \_\_\_\_\_ to end another human being's life for reasons of selfishness, and that was my decision at that \_\_\_\_\_." Chapman thought that by killing someone famous he would achieve "\_\_\_\_\_ notoriety and fame."

*rock*  
*time*  
*board*  
*decision*  
*authorities*  
*instant*  
*any*  
*instead*

Chapman is serving a \_\_\_\_\_ of 20 years to life for shooting Lennon. He was first eligible for parole in 2000 but prison officials decided not to \_\_\_\_\_ him. His next parole hearing will be in August 2012. He hopes that talking about his \_\_\_\_\_ will help him get released. He revealed that his \_\_\_\_\_ belief in God while in prison has made him a better person. He admitted that he understands why members of the public want to keep him \_\_\_\_\_ up forever. Another new revelation is that Chapman had other famous people on his hit \_\_\_\_\_, including actress Elizabeth Taylor and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan. He \_\_\_\_\_ John Lennon because he was "more \_\_\_\_\_". He said: "I found out what building he was at and went there."

*crime*  
*accessible*  
*list*  
*release*  
*locked*  
*sentence*  
*chose*  
*deepening*

# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

The man who killed former Beatle John Lennon \_\_\_\_\_ why he did it. Mark David Chapman, 55, explained his reasons to his parole board on September 7th. It is the first time \_\_\_\_\_ for murdering Lennon on the steps of the rock legend's apartment in New York on December 8th, 1980. He said: "I felt that by killing John Lennon \_\_\_\_\_, and instead of that I became a murderer and murderers are not somebodies." He added: "\_\_\_\_\_ to end another human being's life \_\_\_\_\_, and that was my decision at that time." Chapman thought that by killing someone famous he would achieve "\_\_\_\_\_."

Chapman is serving a sentence of \_\_\_\_\_ shooting Lennon. He was \_\_\_\_\_ in 2000 but prison officials decided \_\_\_\_\_. His next parole hearing will be in August 2012. He hopes that talking about his crime will help him get released. He revealed that \_\_\_\_\_ while in prison has made him a better person. He admitted that he understands why members of the public want to keep \_\_\_\_\_. Another new revelation is that Chapman had other famous people on his hit list, including actress Elizabeth Taylor and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan. He chose John Lennon because he was "more accessible". He said: "I found out \_\_\_\_\_ and went there."

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

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

<b>hit</b>	<b>list</b>

- 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"><li>• former</li><li>• first</li><li>• rock</li><li>• instead</li><li>• horrible</li><li>• instant</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sentence</li><li>• hearing</li><li>• belief</li><li>• locked</li><li>• hit</li><li>• chose</li></ul>
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# STUDENT JOHN LENNON SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

Write five GOOD questions about John Lennon 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.

# JOHN LENNON 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 name 'John Lennon'?
- c) What do you know about John Lennon?
- d) Do you think all celebrities are in danger of being killed by crazy people?
- e) Why do you think Chapman kept quiet about his reasons for killing John Lennon for 20 years?
- f) Was John Lennon the best Beatle?
- g) What's your favourite John Lennon song and why?
- h) Would you like to be a somebody?
- i) What's the most selfish thing you've ever done?
- j) Why do so many people want to be famous?

*John Lennon's killer says why he did it – 17th September, 2010*  
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# JOHN LENNON DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think Chapman should stay in prison for life?
- c) Do you think Chapman talking about his crime will help him?
- d) What did the world lose when John Lennon died?
- e) What do you think prison officials look at when considering someone for parole?
- f) People say John Lennon's 'Imagine' is one of the best songs ever written. What do you think?
- g) Was John Lennon better as a Beatle or as a solo artist?
- h) John Lennon said, "Everything is clearer when you're in love." What do you think?
- i) Lennon said, "All we are saying is give peace a chance." What do you think of these words?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Mark David Chapman?

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# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

The man who killed (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Beatle John Lennon has told prison authorities why he did it. Mark David Chapman, 55, explained his reasons (2) \_\_\_\_\_ his parole board on September 7th. It is the first time he has given any explanation for murdering Lennon on the steps of the rock legend's apartment in New York on December 8th, 1980. He said: "I felt that (3) \_\_\_\_\_ killing John Lennon I would become (4) \_\_\_\_\_, and instead of that I became a murderer and murderers are not somebodies." He added: "I made a horrible decision to end another human being's life for reasons of (5) \_\_\_\_\_, and that was my decision at that time." Chapman thought that by killing someone famous he would achieve "instant notoriety and (6) \_\_\_\_\_."

Chapman is (7) \_\_\_\_\_ a sentence of 20 years to life for shooting Lennon. He was first eligible for parole in 2000 but prison officials decided not to release him. His next parole (8) \_\_\_\_\_ will be in August 2012. He hopes that talking about his crime will help him get released. He revealed that his (9) \_\_\_\_\_ belief in God while in prison has made him a better person. He admitted that he understands why members of the public want to keep him locked (10) \_\_\_\_\_ forever. Another new revelation is that Chapman had other famous people on his hit (11) \_\_\_\_\_, including actress Elizabeth Taylor and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan. He chose John Lennon because he was "more (12) \_\_\_\_\_". He said: "I found out what building he was at and went there."

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

- |                  |                |               |                 |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. (a) former    | (b) firmer     | (c) farmer    | (d) framer      |
| 2. (a) at        | (b) on         | (c) to        | (d) by          |
| 3. (a) so        | (b) at         | (c) to        | (d) by          |
| 4. (a) body      | (b) somebody   | (c) anybody   | (d) everybody   |
| 5. (a) selfless  | (b) selfish    | (c) selfishly | (d) selfishness |
| 6. (a) famous    | (b) famed      | (c) fame      | (d) famously    |
| 7. (a) saving    | (b) serving    | (c) receiving | (d) giving      |
| 8. (a) hearing   | (b) seeing     | (c) feeling   | (d) touching    |
| 9. (a) deepening | (b) deepens    | (c) depending | (d) deepen      |
| 10. (a) out      | (b) forward    | (c) up        | (d) down        |
| 11. (a) memo     | (b) note       | (c) record    | (d) list        |
| 12. (a) access   | (b) accessible | (c) accessed  | (d) accesses    |

John Lennon's killer says why he did it – 17th September, 2010

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# WRITING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john\\_lennon.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1009/100917-john_lennon.html)

Write about **John Lennon** 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 John Lennon's murder. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. JOHN LENNON:** Make a poster about John Lennon. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. GIVE PEACE A CHANCE:** Write a magazine article about peace. Include imaginary interviews with people who think peace will come to all the world.

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. LETTER:** Write a letter to John Lennon's best friend. Ask him/her three questions about John Lennon. Give him/her your opinion of the three best things John Lennon did for the world. 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. T      d. T      e. F      f. T      g. F      h. T

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. former      | a. ex-          |
| 2. authorities | b. officials    |
| 3. legend      | c. superstar    |
| 4. somebody    | d. VIP          |
| 5. notoriety   | e. infamy       |
| 6. serving     | f. carrying out |
| 7. eligible    | g. entitled     |
| 8. belief      | h. faith        |
| 9. revelation  | i. announcement |
| 10. accessible | j. reachable    |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The man who killed former          | a. Beatle John Lennon |
| 2. It is the first time he has given  | b. any explanation    |
| 3. murderers are                      | c. not somebodies     |
| 4. I made a                           | d. horrible decision  |
| 5. achieve instant notoriety          | e. and fame           |
| 6. serving a sentence of              | f. 20 years to life   |
| 7. prison officials decided not       | g. to release him     |
| 8. his deepening                      | h. belief in God      |
| 9. the public want to keep him locked | i. up forever         |
| 10. other famous people on            | j. his hit list       |

## GAP FILL:

### John Lennon's killer says why he did it

The man who killed former Beatle John Lennon has told prison **authorities** why he did it. Mark David Chapman, 55, explained his reasons to his parole **board** on September 7th. It is the first time he has given **any** explanation for murdering Lennon on the steps of the **rock** legend's apartment in New York on December 8th, 1980. He said: "I felt that by killing John Lennon I would become somebody, and **instead** of that I became a murderer and murderers are not somebodies." He added: "I made a horrible **decision** to end another human being's life for reasons of selfishness, and that was my decision at that **time**." Chapman thought that by killing someone famous he would achieve "**instant** notoriety and fame."

Chapman is serving a **sentence** of 20 years to life for shooting Lennon. He was first eligible for parole in 2000 but prison officials decided not to **release** him. His next parole hearing will be in August 2012. He hopes that talking about his **crime** will help him get released. He revealed that his **deepening** belief in God while in prison has made him a better person. He admitted that he understands why members of the public want to keep him **locked** up forever. Another new revelation is that Chapman had other famous people on his hit **list**, including actress Elizabeth Taylor and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan. He **chose** John Lennon because he was "more **accessible**". He said: "I found out what building he was at and went there."

## LANGUAGE WORK

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