

PRE-READING WARM-UP QUESTIONS ☀

1. Why are humans so interested in criminals and crime?
2. How do some criminals profit from their crimes?
3. Why do many young people think it's *cool* to be *bad*?

“Life is nothing but a competition to be the criminal rather than the victim.”
Bertrand Russell

PRE-READING VOCABULARY TASK ☀

Match the words on the left with the meanings on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. glorify | a. to avoid an organization, product, or person as a form of protest |
| 2. outsmart | b. a keyword used for categorizing topics online |
| 3. hashtag | c. a well-known person or thing |
| 4. boycott | d. famous for having a bad characteristic |
| 5. copycat | e. a person who has killed many people |
| 6. household name | f. a period when the sale of alcohol was forbidden |
| 7. notorious | g. to make smarter choices than another person |
| 8. brag | h. to make something more visible by celebrating it |
| 9. prohibition | i. to talk about how good someone or something is |
| 10. serial killer | j. a person who copies another person's behavior |



Glorifying Criminals

How did “bad” become “cool”?

1. Does the face of a criminal belong on the glossy cover of a magazine? According to opinion polls, many people disagree with the **glorification** of criminals. The truth is that crime sells. When young, attractive, or famous people commit crimes, the media cashes in. The media also makes money when criminals **outsmart** law enforcement. Who doesn't love a good chase?
2. How far is the media willing to go to shine a spotlight on a criminal? In 2013, *Rolling Stone* magazine put an accused terrorist on the cover of its magazine. Many businesses refused to sell the issue. In fact, a **hashtag** telling people to **boycott** the magazine began trending on Twitter. What effect did this negative publicity have on sales? Back in 1970, cult leader Charles Manson made the cover of *Rolling Stone*. The interviewer won an important award for the piece. It also helped Charles Manson get more fan mail.
3. After the Colorado Theater shooting in 2012, a brother of one of the victims made a special request to the president. He asked President Obama not to name the shooter when he addressed the nation about the tragedy. He wanted the victims to be remembered rather than the shooter. This didn't stop the media from repeatedly comparing the killer to a comic book character. Criminals who are nicknamed by the media often become **household names**. Who can forget names like Scarface, the Black Widow, or Son of Sam? These are the criminals that inspire **copycats**. Fortunately, they are also the criminals who are most likely to get caught.
4. Young people often **brag** about living in dangerous areas. They think it's cool to have friends or relatives in gangs. How did criminal behavior become so cool? Is the media or the entertainment industry to blame? Al Capone was a **notorious** American gangster in the **prohibition** era. Movies, television shows, and books have been written about him. Criminals like Capone often profit from their crimes. Would you buy a book written by a **serial killer**?

COMPREHENSION

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. According to polls, how do most people feel about the glorification of criminals?
2. Why did some businesses boycott an issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine in 2013?
3. What good thing can come out of the nicknaming of notorious criminals?
4. What do kids sometimes brag about?
5. Who was Al Capone?



VOCABULARY REVIEW

A. Using New Vocabulary

Use the vocabulary from page 1 to rewrite the following sentences. Underline the keyword.

1. #Boston is trending on Twitter.

2. Bonnie and Clyde were known around the world.

3. Eli always tells us that his cousin is in a gang.

4. People in New York are refusing to eat at that fast-food restaurant.

5. The movie is about a murderer who kills a bunch of neighbors.

6. Police searched for the bank robbers for ten years, but the thieves never got caught.

B. Word Forms

Look at the bold word in each sentence. Is it used as a noun, verb, or adjective? Place your answer in the blank.

1. My brother always **brags** about how his friends beat people up. _____
2. During **prohibition**, many gangsters sold alcohol illegally. _____
3. Mass murderers often inspire **copycats**. _____
4. The newspaper had a special feature on four **notorious** Chicago-based gangsters. _____
5. The victim's family members thought the media treated the **terrorist** like a celebrity. _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Should radio stations and nightclubs ban music with lyrics that glorify criminal behavior?
2. Studies suggest that notorious criminals with nicknames are more likely to be caught. Is this a good enough reason to assign a nickname to a criminal, or do you think this practice should be ended?
3. Are we more tolerant of criminal behavior because we are so used to seeing it on TV and in films?

CRITICAL THINKING

The media often uses words like “mastermind” or “the perfect crime” to describe criminals who outsmart law enforcement. Do you think that the language chosen by the media promotes crime?