

TEXT	PEACE
AUTHOR	George Calderon
THEMES	Houses and homes (unit 4), life experiences (unit 13)
VOCABULARY	Social roles, surprise, danger
WRITING	Students write physical descriptions of people.
SPEAKING	Students describe and draw the people.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

George Calderon (1868–1915) was an English writer, critic, translator and expert on Russian literature (see portrait on the Worksheet). He was the first person in the UK to translate and direct a play by Anton Chekhov (*The Seagull*). A socially committed intellectual, Calderon worked closely with leaders of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League. His plays were very popular and performed all over the country. At the age of 45, he enlisted in the army and fought in Flanders before being sent to Gallipoli, where he was killed in 1915. The extract used here is from a collection of his one-act plays in which he shows great skill at writing in a range of registers from comic, to profound, didactic and tragic.

WARMER

Put students in small groups and ask them to think of as many reasons as they can for why someone might steal something. After a few minutes, ask for suggestions from the groups and write them on the board. When you have a list, ask students which situation they think would make a good play or scene in a film or TV programme.

ABOUT YOU

You probably need to pre-teach *burglar*. Explain that a burglar steals things from houses and other buildings. Students can discuss their choices in small groups. Follow their discussions with a class vote to see what people think.

Go through the introduction and clarify the situation. Explain the meaning of *ladder* and get students to imagine a library with high shelves where a ladder is used to get to the top shelves. Clarify that Postlethwaite has climbed up this ladder and is now sitting on the top shelf. Explain that italics in a play text are usually stage directions, not spoken.

- 1 Students read the text through silently. Then, working in pairs, they read the parts of Postlethwaite and the burglar. Ask them to discuss the reading question and then open the discussion to the whole class.

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Possible answers

- 1 He is annoyed about being shot at and he is also annoyed when people don't have a routine.
- 2 The first time he is describing himself and the second time because he moves the ladder to stop Postlethwaite getting down. He is being careful.
- 3 You might have to elicit this answer by drawing attention to what Postlethwaite is talking about and where he is. The first *true* is a fact – he didn't know it was going to happen. The second answer involves the double meaning of the word *position*. First of all, it means a job or responsibility in an organisation (he is talking about his job in his speech). But *position* also means a physical posture and location – in this case being on top of a high bookcase, in what is, we imagine, an uncomfortable position. This is why the burglar says *true*.
- 4 Ask for opinions/suggestions from the whole class and talk about them.

VOCABULARY

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Answers

- 1 citizens 2 speech 3 politician 4 useless

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Answers

- 1 routine 2 valuable 3 ashamed 4 position

WRITING

- 5 Encourage students to write down as many physical details as they can think of. Also encourage them to exaggerate as this will provide more material for the Speaking activity.

SPEAKING

- 6 Clarify the instructions and get the students to work in pairs. Putting the sketches up around the room creates a nice 'rogues' gallery'.

MIXED ABILITY

This is a good activity for pairing weaker and stronger students. As they are producing sketches, there is a clear visual element the weaker student can work with and the stronger student can refer to when clarifying/explaining vocabulary that might arise. If you decide to create a 'rogues' gallery', get the stronger student to write a short 'wanted' text to go with the picture.