



## “Puzzling Mysteries”

Help students prepare for their Cultural Byte with these supportive pre-talk activities

The aim of these activities is to present and practice target vocabulary in a fun and engaging way which will later be used during the Cultural Byte video. Although the aim is to help with understanding prior to the video, they may be adapted to fit your classroom’s specific needs for use at any time.

### Word list for Oxford Cultural Byte “Puzzling Mysteries”:

1. Clue (noun) 2. Disappear (verb) 3. Agility (noun) 4. Storm (noun) 5. Courageous (adjective) 6. Pattern (noun) 7. Knowledge (noun) 8. Fingerprint (noun) 9. Magnifying glass (noun) 10. Suspect (noun) 11. Unknown (adjective) 12. Detective (noun) 13. Magnifying glass (noun) 14. Evidence (noun) 15. Legend (noun) 16. Solve (verb) 17. Predict (verb) 18. Crime (noun) 19. Lies (noun) 20. Investigate (verb) For all activities, please refer to the wordlist provided

### PUZZLING GAMES

#### Secret Message

☐ Divide the students into teams. ☐ Write a message on the board using a basic code e.g. replace letters A-Z with numbers 1-26. ☐ Get the students to try and guess the secret message. ☐ The first team to give the correct answer then writes another secret message for the other teams to guess.

#### Disappearance

☐ Choose a word from the vocabulary set and write it on the board but replace some of the letters with dashes. ☐ Ask students to see if they can solve the word. If they can’t, then give them another letter. If the student guesses correctly, then they can take the role of the teacher and give the rest of the class a different word with dashes.



### **The missing piece**

□ Get students to memorise the classroom for a minute. □ Ask one student to leave the room while another student removes something or changes something in the class. □ When the student comes back in to the classroom, they have to say what has changed.

### **Mind Maps**

□ Get students to write the vocabulary topic on the board on a scrap piece of paper in red or green ink. □ Set a time limit depending on the level of your students for them to write down as many things as possible related to the vocabulary topic. □ This game could also be played in teams and the team with the most words in the winner.

### **Who's that?**

□ Write the name of a well-known person on a sticky note. Choose a student to come to the front of the class and stick the note on their head. □ The student can only answer yes/no to the questions that the rest of the class gives him/her. □ Repeat with different students.

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## “Puzzling Mysteries”

Improve your knowledge of British culture by doing these activities *after* watching the **Culture Byte** video

### POST-TALK SPEAKING ACTIVITY

#### Notes for the teacher

The objective of this task is that the students, in groups, discuss what they know about several curious unsolved mysteries in the UK, and then find out information about them. This activity is designed to foster communication between the students and to practice mediation. Students will have to think about the best way to convey the information they gather to the rest of their classmates. The activity should be done using English as much as possible, and students can use a dictionary or the internet if needed, and some of the information learned in the Oxford Cultural Byte.

#### Steps:

1. Divide the class into groups of 4 or five students and have them discuss what they know about the mysteries presented in exercise 1. (10-15 minutes)
2. Ask each group to choose one of the mysteries and find out some information, trying to answer all the questions in exercise 2. (15-20 minutes)
3. Each group must prepare a short presentation in order to show their classmates their findings. (5-10 min)
4. Once they have finished, each group must present their findings to the rest of the class. (5-7 minutes per group)



## Worksheet

1. There are a lot of unsolved mysteries in the UK. Here are four famous ones that people are still puzzled about. Do you know anything about them? In groups, discuss the information you know about each mystery or what you think happened.

The Enfield Haunting    The Loch Ness Monster    The Highgate Vampire    UFO Landing in Scotland

2. Now, choose one of the mysteries and search for information about it online. Try to answer all the following questions:
  - a. When did the mystery happen?
  - b. Where did it happen?
  - c. What are the events that took place?
  - d. What do you think that happened in reality?
3. Gather the information you have found and create a short presentation for the rest of your classmates. You could find pictures online, draw on the blackboard, or even act the mystery out! Be creative!
4. Present the information you have found out to the rest of your classmates.



# Teacher's Notes

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### TEACHER INTRODUCTION

This series of online Cultural Byte videos and this support material have been produced with a specific online audience in mind, however, we want to make clear that teachers can choose to use these videos and their accompanying materials with other audiences and other levels of English proficiency, but they may need to provide extra help and guidance in cases where the students are younger or have a lower level of English.

These are some notes containing ideas of how to present or accompany the Puzzling Mysteries Cultural Byte video.

#### Activities for BEFORE the students watch the video:

Students can be sent the pdf files containing the pre-talk activities BEFORE they are given access to the video. These activities include individual questions as well as group work and will help the students familiarise themselves with the topic in the video and the relevant vocabulary.

**Additional multimedia:** can be used by the teacher to give an online class or sent as links to the students for them to use in their projects or research around the subject.

#### Nazca Lines

Researchers surveying in southern Peru with drones have captured images of ancient geoglyphs. More than 50 of the massive ancient drawings are considered new discoveries by archaeologists  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Spvn\\_BGCLa0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Spvn_BGCLa0)

#### The Bermuda Triangle

Why is it that not a month goes by without a boat or plane being claimed by the Bermuda Triangle? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVoQ8pGWqR8>

#### Easter Island Statues

Researchers test a new theory that suggests how ancient Easter Islanders may have used ropes to "walk" the Moai to their platforms: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpNuh-J5IgE>



### **Loch Ness Monster**

New Evidence of the Loch Ness Monster: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgacFkMIqyE>

When did Gordon Holmes see the monster?

### **Mystery of the exploding water melon (Slo Mo Guys)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PK8dsAeMmPk>

### **Mystery of the taxi killer**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDFdX20yFP0>

### **Escape Rooms – The Crystal Maze ( London and Manchester)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWoECqVI7UQ>

### **References to lateral thinking puzzles**

<https://www.destination-innovation.com/the-top-ten-lateral-thinking-puzzles/>

### **Activities to be completed AFTER students watch the video:**

Students can be given the post video activities at the same time as the video itself. This way they can answer some of the questions during the showing and some after. This may require from the students to reproduce information they have received in the video as well as extending and deepening their knowledge of the topic.