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In response to the growing popularity of IELTS the Taipei Times, in conjunction with the British Council, brings our readers an IELTS preparation page which will run every Saturday on p14 of the Taipei Times. Each week will focus on a different area of the test. IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is an upper-intermediate test of English communication. It can be used for university entry and emigration around the English-speaking world and beyond. It measures your ability to communicate across the four language skills — reading, writing, listening and speaking — through authentic challenging tasks. With over 700,000 people taking IELTS annually, it is one of the fastest growing English tests in the world, trusted and accepted by over 4,000 organisations and faculties worldwide, and is a great alternative to TOEFL.

IELTS speaking: multi-word verbs

Multi-word verbs (or phrasal verbs), which are verbs made up of two or three words, are very common in spoken English. To sound more natural and fluent when you speak English, you should try to learn and use them. For example, it sounds much more natural to say "I went to a party at the weekend" than "I attended a party at the weekend" which sounds too formal.

Recording different topics

When you are studying a topic in English, try and learn all the multi-word verbs that go with it. For example, if you are learning about sports, make a note of:

- To burn off calories
- To warm up
- To work off stress
- To join in a game
- To knock another team out
- To work out at the gym



PHOTO: MICHAEL KEARNEY, TAIPEI TIMES

Topic: crime!

The phrasal verbs below are all to do with crime. Try and guess their meaning from the whole sentence.

- To get over a gate
- To break out of jail
- To come up with an idea
- To make off with some cash
- To break into a shop
- To pass away while in prison
- To get away with cheating
- To hold up* a bank
- To beat someone up*
- To tip off* the authorities



Grammar point

*These phrasal verbs can be separated. You can say:

- He held up the bank. ✓
- He held the bank up. ✓
- He held it up. ✓
- But not: He held up it. X

Practise task one

Try and write the correct phrasal verb from the list above into each sentence. You might have to change the tense.

1. The leader of the gang _____ a brilliant plan.
2. The criminal _____ last year. He was executed for his crimes.
3. It took me five minutes to _____ the barbed wire fence.
4. The thieves _____ more than £8,000 pounds worth of jewellery.
5. One of the gang's neighbours _____ the police when he saw him acting suspiciously.
6. The man who illegally base jumped off 101 _____ it. He was out of the country before the police knew what had happened.
7. The prisoners managed to _____ in broad daylight.
8. The thieves _____ the house by a side window.
9. Thieves _____ a local bank yesterday.
10. An old man was _____ in the street yesterday.



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SPEAKING PART TWO

Look at the prompt for IELTS speaking part two. You have one minute to think and make notes. Then you have to talk for one to two minutes.



Talk about a famous event that people in your country remember.

You should say:

- ▶ When it took place
- ▶ Who was involved
- ▶ What happened

And explain why people still remember it.

Practise task two

In the model answer below, the student has decided to talk about a famous crime in the UK. A lot of the phrasal verbs have been removed. Read through his answer and write the most suitable phrasal verb from the list on the left-hand side of the page into each space. Remember to change the tense!

▶ Model answer

I'd like talk about a crime story that I read about recently: the Great Train Robbery. It happened in, er..., 1963 I think. As far as I can remember, the armed robbers ___1___ the Glasgow to London Royal Mail train, and then ___2___ £2.6m in cash. No one knows who originally ___3___ the plan, but it's gone down in history as one of Britain's most daring crimes.

Apparently, a gang of 15 robbers brought the train to a halt in Buckinghamshire in the English countryside with a fake stop signal, and then they ___4___ the driver's cabin. Sadly, the gang ___5___ the driver ___5___ and he was severely injured. He survived, but he never completely ___6___ the attack. I think he ___7___ in 1970.

At first the gang thought they had ___8___ it, but months later, detectives found the robbers' base, Leatherslade Farm. A series of clues the detectives found there led them to most of the gang members, who were caught and sentenced. I think some of them got 30 years! A landlady also ___9___ police who were able to arrest two more of the gang. She was suspicious because they paid her three months rent in advance in used pound notes.

One of the most famous members of the gang, Ronnie Biggs, later ___10___ of prison and fled to Australia and then Brazil, where he was able to stay because he had a son with a Brazilian woman. But he went back to Britain a few years ago, broke and very ill, to serve the rest of his sentence. I guess the robbery is so well known because it was such an exciting story, and there have been so many books and films about it that the robbers have become like celebrities.

Practise task three

Think of a famous crime you know about. Try and use the phrasal verbs mentioned to make sentences about it.



PHOTO: MICHAEL KEARNEY, TAIPEI TIMES

Task two answers
1. held up 2. made off with 3. came up with 4. broke into 5. beat (the driver) up 6. got away with 7. passed away 8. got away with 9. tipped off 10. broke out

Task one answers
1. came up with 2. passed away 3. got over 4. made off with 5. tipped off 6. got away with 7. break out 8. broke into 9. held up 10. beaten up