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Spain mayor steals food for the poor

17th August, 2012

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.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

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

A mayor in a small Spanish town has become a hero after helping steal food from supermarkets to give to the poor. The modern-day Robin Hood is Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo, 59, the elected leader of the southern town of Marinaleda in Andalusia. Mayor Gordillo has immunity from prosecution under Andalusian law and so can break the law without being arrested. He has so far orchestrated several raids on supermarkets to hand out the stolen food to poor families. Unfortunately, those helping him are not immune from prosecution and seven have been arrested for theft. Gordillo has been mayor for 30 years and his recent exploits have seen his popularity skyrocket, with crowds gathering to see his food grabs.

Many Spaniards are facing severe economic conditions. A quarter of Spain's workforce is jobless and austerity measures mean many now live in poverty. Things are even worse in Andalusia where unemployment is over 30 per cent. Mr Gordillo defended his role in stealing food for the less well-off. He said: "There are people who don't have enough to eat. In the 21st century, this is an absolute disgrace." Spain's conservative government has criticised Gordillo, accusing him of taking part in publicity stunts to boost his own popularity. The mayor retaliated by saying he would happily accept being arrested. He is currently leading a three-week anti-austerity protest march to Spain's capital Madrid.

WARM-UPS

1. STEALING FOR THE POOR: Walk around the class and talk to other students about stealing for the poor. Change partners often. Share your findings with your first partner.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

hero / stealing / elected / leader / immunity / prosecution / arrested / theft / exploits / severe economic conditions / workforce / jobless / austerity / disgrace / protest

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

3. STEALING: How bad and what should the punishment be? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Stealing...	How bad?	Punishment?
A country's leader stealing from tax payers.		
A store worker taking home items past their sell-by date.		
A mayor stealing from supermarkets to give to the poor.		
A Hollywood superstar stealing just for fun.		
A homeless person stealing food to survive.		
A thief stealing priceless art from a national museum.		

4. POVERTY: Students A **strongly** believe there will be no poverty one day; Students B **strongly** believe it will always exist. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. AUSTERITY: Which of these things could you not cut down on? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner. Put the things you need most at the top.

- chocolate and sweets
- drinks
- restaurants
- phone and text use
- hobbies
- clothes
- going out
- English lessons

6. HERO: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'hero'. 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/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

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

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The people in a small town are angry their mayor is stealing food. | T / F |
| b. The mayor cannot be arrested for stealing the food. | T / F |
| c. The mayor only organizes the stealing but does not actually steal it. | T / F |
| d. The mayor said prices have skyrocketed for 30 years. | T / F |
| e. Around 25% of Spain's workforce is unemployed. | T / F |
| f. Unemployment in the mayor's region is double the national average. | T / F |
| g. The mayor said he understood his actions were a disgrace. | T / F |
| h. The mayor is now on a three-week protest walk to Madrid. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. modern-day | a. robbery |
| 2. immunity | b. shame |
| 3. orchestrated | c. experiencing |
| 4. theft | d. exemption |
| 5. exploits | e. total |
| 6. facing | f. contemporary |
| 7. poverty | g. hit back |
| 8. absolute | h. deeds |
| 9. disgrace | i. arranged |
| 10. retaliated | j. destitution |

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. steal food from supermarkets | a. economic conditions |
| 2. immunity from | b. to see his food grabs |
| 3. He has so far orchestrated | c. the less well-off |
| 4. his recent exploits have seen | d. in poverty |
| 5. crowds gathering | e. several raids |
| 6. facing severe | f. to give to the poor |
| 7. many now live | g. disgrace |
| 8. stealing food for | h. his popularity skyrocket |
| 9. this is an absolute | i. austerity protest march |
| 10. a three-week anti- | j. prosecution |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

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

A mayor in a small Spanish town has become a (1) _____ after helping steal food from supermarkets to give to the poor. The modern-day Robin Hood is Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo, 59, the (2) _____ leader of the southern town of Marinaleda in Andalusia. Mayor Gordillo has (3) _____ from prosecution under Andalusian law and so can (4) _____ the law without being arrested. He has so far orchestrated several raids on supermarkets to (5) _____ out the stolen food to poor families. Unfortunately, those helping him are not immune from prosecution and seven have been arrested for (6) _____. Gordillo has been mayor for 30 years and his recent (7) _____ have seen his popularity skyrocket, with crowds gathering to see his food (8) _____.

hand
break
elected
exploits
hero
grabs
immunity
theft

Many Spaniards are facing (9) _____ economic conditions. A quarter of Spain's workforce is jobless and austerity (10) _____ mean many now live in (11) _____. Things are even worse in Andalusia where unemployment is over 30 per cent. Mr Gordillo defended his (12) _____ in stealing food for the less well-off. He said: "There are people who don't have enough to eat. In the 21st century, this is an (13) _____ disgrace." Spain's conservative government has criticised Gordillo, accusing him of taking part in publicity (14) _____ to boost his own popularity. The mayor retaliated by saying he would happily (15) _____ being arrested. He is currently leading a three-week anti-austerity protest (16) _____ to Spain's capital Madrid.

role
accept
measures
stunts
severe
poverty
march
absolute

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

A mayor in a small Spanish town (1) _____ after helping steal food from supermarkets to give to the poor. The modern-day Robin Hood is Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo, 59, (2) _____ the southern town of Marinaleda in Andalusia. Mayor Gordillo has immunity from prosecution under Andalusian law and (3) _____ without being arrested. He has (4) _____ several raids on supermarkets to hand out the stolen food to poor families. Unfortunately, those helping him (5) _____ prosecution and seven have been arrested for theft. Gordillo has been mayor for 30 years and his recent exploits have seen (6) _____, with crowds gathering to see his food grabs.

Many Spaniards are (7) _____ conditions. A quarter of Spain's workforce is jobless and austerity measures mean many now live in poverty. Things (8) _____ Andalusia where unemployment is over 30 per cent. Mr Gordillo defended his role in stealing food (9) _____. He said: "There are people who don't have enough to eat. In the 21st century, this (10) _____." Spain's conservative government has criticised Gordillo, accusing him of taking part in publicity stunts (11) _____ popularity. The mayor retaliated by saying he would happily accept being arrested. He is currently leading a three-week (12) _____ march to Spain's capital Madrid.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

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

steal	food
--------------	-------------

- 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">• become• modern• under• several• theft• crowds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• facing• poverty• role• absolute• boost• currently
--	--

STEALING FOR THE POOR SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

Write five GOOD questions about stealing for the poor 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.

STEALING FOR THE POOR 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 word 'steal'?
- c) Is the mayor a thief?
- d) Is he a hero or a villain?
- e) Is the mayor hurting others by stealing from supermarkets?
- f) Should a mayor have immunity from stealing?
- g) What other unlawful things could the mayor do to help the poor?
- h) Should the mayor steal things on his own so others don't have to get arrested?
- i) Do you think the mayor is doing this to get re-elected?
- j) Would you gather to see your mayor steal from a supermarket?

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STEALING FOR THE POOR DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you support what the mayor is doing?
- c) Why do you think the police don't stop the stealing to return the goods to the shelves?
- d) Do you think supermarkets should ban the mayor from their stores?
- e) Why is Spain's economy in such a bad way?
- f) What do you think of the idea of robbing from the rich to give to the poor?
- g) Do you agree with the mayor that people without food to eat is an "absolute disgrace"?
- h) Is it a bigger disgrace the world does so little to help the victims of famine?
- i) What advice would you give to the mayor?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the mayor?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1208/120817-robin_hood.html

A mayor in a small Spanish town has become a hero (1) _____ helping steal food from supermarkets to give to the poor. The modern-(2) _____ Robin Hood is Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo, 59, the elected leader of the southern town of Marinaleda in Andalusia. Mayor Gordillo has (3) _____ from prosecution under Andalusian law and so can break the law without being arrested. He has so far (4) _____ several raids on supermarkets to hand out the stolen food to poor families. Unfortunately, those helping him are not immune from prosecution and seven have been arrested for (5) _____. Gordillo has been mayor for 30 years and his recent exploits have seen his popularity skyrocket, with crowds gathering to see his food (6) _____.

Many Spaniards are (7) _____ severe economic conditions. A quarter of Spain's workforce is jobless and austerity measures mean many now live (8) _____ poverty. Things are even worse in Andalusia where unemployment is over 30 per cent. Mr Gordillo defended his role in stealing food for the (9) _____ well-off. He said: "There are people who don't have enough to eat. In the 21st century, this is an (10) _____ disgrace." Spain's conservative government has criticised Gordillo, accusing him of (11) _____ part in publicity stunts to boost his own popularity. The mayor retaliated by saying he would happily accept being arrested. He is currently (12) _____ a three-week anti-austerity protest march to Spain's capital Madrid.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) ante | (b) post | (c) subsequent | (d) after |
| 2. | (a) day | (b) week | (c) month | (d) year |
| 3. | (a) immunizations | (b) immunity | (c) immune | (d) immunizes |
| 4. | (a) composed | (b) written | (c) orchestrated | (d) played |
| 5. | (a) cleft | (b) bereft | (c) theft | (d) deft |
| 6. | (a) grubs | (b) grabs | (c) grids | (d) grins |
| 7. | (a) heading | (b) mouthing | (c) nosing | (d) facing |
| 8. | (a) in | (b) up | (c) at | (d) on |
| 9. | (a) small | (b) less | (c) poor | (d) more |
| 10. | (a) arrested | (b) austerity | (c) absolved | (d) absolute |
| 11. | (a) raking | (b) faking | (c) taking | (d) making |
| 12. | (a) leading | (b) leads | (c) leaders | (d) led |

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 the modern-day Robin Hood. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. STEALING: Make a poster about stealing. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. MAYOR: Write a magazine article about Mayor Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for him and those who are against him.

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 Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo. Ask him three questions about his action. Give him three of your opinions on his actions. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. T d. F e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. modern-day | a. contemporary |
| 2. immunity | b. exemption |
| 3. orchestrated | c. arranged |
| 4. theft | d. robbery |
| 5. exploits | e. deeds |
| 6. facing | f. experiencing |
| 7. poverty | g. destitution |
| 8. absolute | h. total |
| 9. disgrace | i. shame |
| 10. retaliated | j. hit back |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. steal food from supermarkets | a. to give to the poor |
| 2. immunity from | b. prosecution |
| 3. He has so far orchestrated | c. several raids |
| 4. his recent exploits have seen | d. his popularity skyrocket |
| 5. crowds gathering | e. to see his food grabs |
| 6. facing severe | f. economic conditions |
| 7. many now live | g. in poverty |
| 8. stealing food for | h. the less well-off |
| 9. this is an absolute | i. disgrace |
| 10. a three-week anti- | j. austerity protest march |

GAP FILL:

Spain mayor steals food for the poor

A mayor in a small Spanish town has become a (1) **hero** after helping steal food from supermarkets to give to the poor. The modern-day Robin Hood is Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo, 59, the (2) **elected** leader of the southern town of Marinaleda in Andalusia. Mayor Gordillo has (3) **immunity** from prosecution under Andalusian law and so can (4) **break** the law without being arrested. He has so far orchestrated several raids on supermarkets to (5) **hand** out the stolen food to poor families. Unfortunately, those helping him are not immune from prosecution and seven have been arrested for (6) **theft**. Gordillo has been mayor for 30 years and his recent (7) **exploits** have seen his popularity skyrocket, with crowds gathering to see his food (8) **grabs**.

Many Spaniards are facing (9) **severe** economic conditions. A quarter of Spain's workforce is jobless and austerity (10) **measures** mean many now live in (11) **poverty**. Things are even worse in Andalusia where unemployment is over 30 per cent. Mr Gordillo defended his (12) **role** in stealing food for the less well-off. He said: "There are people who don't have enough to eat. In the 21st century, this is an (13) **absolute** disgrace." Spain's conservative government has criticised Gordillo, accusing him of taking part in publicity (14) **stunts** to boost his own popularity. The mayor retaliated by saying he would happily (15) **accept** being arrested. He is currently leading a three-week anti-austerity protest (16) **march** to Spain's capital Madrid.

LANGUAGE WORK

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

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