

## People lose money in online dating scam

12<sup>th</sup> April, 2017



There is a new scam on the Internet for those looking for love. Criminals are trying to trick people by using old love letters and romantic language.

Conmen can easily buy "scam packs" to help them trick would-be daters into their scam. The pack is available online and only costs a few dollars. It includes love-letter templates, photos, videos and false identities. This is all that is needed to pretend to be someone looking for love. The criminals pose as potential partners and contact people seeking romance on dating sites. After a period of correspondence, they start asking their victim for money. They use many different kinds of excuses and reasons why they need money.

The police force in London reported 3,900 people being scammed online in 2016. The average amount of money they lost was \$12,500. The average age of the victims was 59 years old. More women than men were scammed, with 61 per cent of the victims being female. A senior police officer described the damage the scams do to victims. He said: "These crimes destroy lives and the emotional damage often far outweighs the financial loss. He advised people against giving strangers money. He said: "Never give money to people you meet online, no matter what emotional sob story the person uses." He added that to be safe, people should always be on their guard when communicating with a stranger online.

Sources: [ibtimes.co.uk](http://ibtimes.co.uk) / [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [thesun.co.uk](http://thesun.co.uk)

## Writing

Meeting face to face is better than online dating. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scam / love / trick / online / a few dollars / false identities / criminals / romance / police / average / female / damage / financial / strangers / emotional / guard

## True / False

- Conmen are using old love letters to trick people. T / F
- An online dating "scam pack" is available for \$100. T / F
- Criminals pretend to be matchmakers. T / F
- All of the criminals use the same reason for wanting money. T / F
- Around 39,000 people were scammed in London in 2016. T / F
- People were scammed out of an average of \$12,500. T / F
- More than 60 per cent of the victims were women. T / F
- A police officer advised people to be on guard when online with a stranger. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>trick</b>          | a. possible    |
| 2. <b>available</b>      | b. targets     |
| 3. <b>false</b>          | c. exceeds     |
| 4. <b>potential</b>      | d. fake        |
| 5. <b>seeking</b>        | e. careful     |
| 6. <b>amount</b>         | f. fool        |
| 7. <b>victims</b>        | g. wreck       |
| 8. <b>destroy</b>        | h. looking for |
| 9. <b>outweighs</b>      | i. on sale     |
| 10. <b>on your guard</b> | j. sum         |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- What advice do you have for people who want to find love online?
- Is it easier to find love online?
- What emotional damage do these scams do?
- Have you ever had any bad experiences online?
- Do you ever tell people sob stories?
- Are you always on your guard when you are online?
- What questions would you like to ask a scammer?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. love                                  | a. costs a few dollars         |
| 2. The pack is available online and only | b. the financial loss          |
| 3. The criminals pose                    | c. victim for money            |
| 4. they start asking their               | d. of money they lost          |
| 5. different kinds of excuses and        | e. letters                     |
| 6. The average amount                    | f. story                       |
| 7. the damage the scams do               | g. as potential partners       |
| 8. emotional damage often far outweighs  | h. their guard                 |
| 9. emotional sob                         | i. to victims                  |
| 10. people should always be on           | j. reasons why they need money |

## Discussion – Student B

- How dangerous are Internet scams?
- What Internet scams do you know about?
- How good are you at creating romantic language?
- What do you think of love letters?
- What do you think of online dating?
- What do you think of the scammers?
- How easy is it to believe scammers?
- How can people send money to a stranger online?

## Spelling

- ilcrnsaim are trying to trick people
- the pack is lavibaael online
- opieltant partners
- After a predoj of correspondence
- different kinds of seexsuc
- ossenra why they need money
- The police rfeco in London
- The evragea age
- 61% of the smitvci being female
- olotienma damage
- inafainlc loss
- communicating with a arnsertg

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. a	5. h
6. j	7. b	8. g	9. c	10. e

## Role Play

### Role A – A Museum

You think a museum is the best place for a first date. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Disneyland, a romantic restaurant or karaoke.

### Role B – Disneyland

You think Disneyland is the best place for a first date. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): a museum, a romantic restaurant or karaoke.

### Role C – A Romantic Restaurant

You think a romantic restaurant is the best place for a first date. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Disneyland, a museum or karaoke.

### Role D – Karaoke

You think karaoke is the best place for a first date. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Disneyland, a romantic restaurant or a museum.

## Speaking – First Date

Rank these with your partner. Put the best place to go on a first date at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| • A museum   | • A picnic in the park  |
| • The movies | • A romantic restaurant |
| • Disneyland | • A shopping mall       |
| • A disco    | • Karaoke               |

### Answers – True False

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.