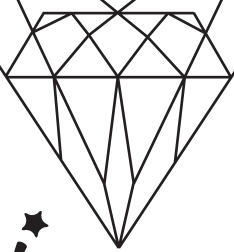


• ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE •

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes



English
Classics **B1** Graded
Readers

Lingua

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и грамматику английского языка.

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SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859 – 1930) was a British writer and physician. He created the Sherlock Holmes character in 1887 for ‘A Study in Scarlet’, the first novel about Holmes and Dr. Watson. The Sherlock Holmes stories are milestones in the field of crime fiction.

Doyle’s other works include fantasy and science fiction stories about Professor Challenger, humorous tales about the Napoleonic soldier Brigadier Gerard, plays, romances, poetry, non-fiction, and historical novels. Many of Doyle’s stories described injustice and cruelty of the British society and became the start of many changes in people’s lives.

BEFORE-READING QUESTIONS:

1. What comes to your mind when you think of the word 'identity'? Describe your associations.
2. Do you remember any stories about oranges? How about the orange pips?
3. Imagine a blue gemstone. In your opinion, is it a rare or an ordinary stone? Would you investigate a case about such a stone with Sherlock Holmes?

A CASE OF IDENTITY

“My dear fellow,” said Sherlock Holmes as we sat on **either** side of the fire in his apartment at Baker Street, “life is much stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. If we could fly out of that window, fly **over** this great city, gently remove the roofs and look at the strange coincidences, the plannings the wonderful **chains of events**, working through generations, leading to the most unexpected results, it would make all fiction meaningless and boring.”

“And yet I am not convinced of it,” I answered. “The **cases** which come to light in the papers are bald and vulgar. We have in our police reports realism pushed to its extreme limits, and yet the result is, it must be confessed, neither fascinating nor artistic.”

“It seems realistic because facts are selected that way,” remarked Holmes. “The police reports focus on the story itself rather than on details. And to an observer these very



details might explain the whole matter. There is nothing so unnatural as the commonplace.”

I smiled and shook my head. “I can quite understand your thinking so,” I said. “Of course, in your position of adviser and helper, you only see the strangest things. But here”—I picked up the morning paper from the ground—“let us put it to a practical test. Here is the first heading upon which I come. ‘A husband’s cruelty to his wife.’ I know without reading it that it is all perfectly familiar to me. There is, of course, the other woman, the drink, the fight, the sympathetic sister or landlady. The most average of writers could invent nothing more average.”

“Indeed, your example is an unfortunate one for your argument,” said Holmes, taking the paper and **glancing** his eye down it. “This is the Dundas separation **case**, and, as it happens, I was **engaged** in clearing up some details about it. The husband didn’t drink, there was no other woman. The problem was his habit to throw his false teeth at his wife after each meal. You will agree that it is not an **action** an average storyteller can imagine. Take some tobacco, Doctor, and admit that I have scored **over** you in your example.”



A Case of Identity



He held out an old golden snuffbox, with a great amethyst in the centre of the lid. It was in such contrast to his simple life that I could not help commenting upon it.

“Ah,” said he, “I forgot that I had not seen you for some weeks. It is a little present from the King of Bohemia for my assistance in the **case** of the Irene Adler papers.”

“And the ring?” I asked, **glancing** at a remarkable brilliant which sparkled upon his finger.

“This is from the reigning family of Holland but I cannot discuss the case. Not even with you, my friend.”

“And have you any case on hand right now?” I asked with interest.

“Some ten or twelve, but nothing interesting. They are important, you understand, without being interesting. Indeed, it is usually unimportant matters that really need some observation and analysis. It gives the charm to an investigation. The larger crimes are usually the simple ones, for the bigger the crime the more **obvious** is the motive. It is possible however, that I will get something interesting very soon and this lady will be my new client.”

He had rose from his chair and stood gazing through the window. Looking **over** his shoulder, I saw a large woman with a large curling red feather in a hat. From under this great armour she was looking up at our window nerv-



ously, while her body moved backward and forward, and her fingers played with her **glove buttons**. Suddenly, like a swimmer who leaves the bank, she ran **across** the road, and we heard the ring of the bell.

“I have seen those symptoms before,” said Holmes. “Hesitating upon the pavement always means an affair of the heart. She would like advice, but she thinks that the matter is too delicate for communication. And yet, when a woman has been seriously wronged by a man she no longer hesitates. The usual symptom is a broken bell wire. Here it might be a love matter, but the maiden is not so much angry. She is upset. Anyway here she comes to resolve our doubts.”

As he spoke there was a tap at the door, and the boy in **buttons** entered to announce Miss Mary Sutherland, while the lady herself stood behind his small black figure. Sherlock Holmes welcomed her, and, having closed the door, gestured her to take one of the armchairs. Then looked her over in his usual manner.

“Do you not find,” he said, “that with your **short sight** it is quite unhealthy to do so much typewriting?”

“I did at first,” she answered, “but now I know where the letters are without looking.” Then, suddenly realising the full meaning of his words, she sighed and looked up, with fear upon her good-humoured face. “You’ve heard



A Case of Identity



about me, Mr. Holmes,” she cried, “else how could you know all that?”

“Never mind,” said Holmes, laughing; “it is my business to know things. Perhaps I have trained myself to see what others don’t. Why else should you come to consult me?”

“I came to you, sir, because I heard of you from Mrs. Etherege, whose husband you found so easily. Oh, Mr. Holmes, I wish you would do as much for me. I’m not rich, but still I have a hundred a year and some money that I make by the machine. I would give it all to know what has become of Mr. Hosmer Angel.”

“Why did you come away to consult me in such a hurry?” asked Sherlock Holmes, with his fingertips together.

Again a look came **over** the face of Miss Mary Sutherland. “Yes, I did run out of the house,” she said, “for it made me angry to see the easy way in which Mr. Windibank—that is, my father—took it all. He would not go to the police, and he would not go to you, and so at last, as he would do nothing, it made me mad, and I just came right away to you.”

“Your father,” said Holmes, “your stepfather, surely, since the name is different.”

“Yes, my stepfather. I call him father, though it sounds funny, too, for he is only five years and two months older than myself.”