

ESL ENGLISH LESSON (60-120 mins) – 20th July 2010

I spy with my little eye...

Vienna – If you like cold war thrillers that involve cloak and dagger type operations then the chances are you'll think of the Orson Wells classic *The Third Man*. We can add Ian Fleming's most famous spy *James Bond, 007*. In real life the Austrian capital recently saw one of the biggest spy swap operations in recent years take place at its international airport between Russia and the USA. But why Vienna? Well, according to the BBC it has a long history as a stomping ground for secret services all over the world as the centre of spy swap operations. Vienna is the capital of a neutral country in the heart of Europe. In fact, Austria has been a spy hub for more than a century. Indeed, even 20 years after the end of the Cold War agents and informants still feel at ease in this romantic city. With the disintegration of the Austro Hungarian Empire and the political turmoil that followed this led to more and more secret services setting up shop in Vienna.

Siegfried Beer, historian and head of the Austrian Centre for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies: "All the services that were here during the Cold War have a presence in Vienna today." He added, "Between the wars Vienna definitely became the centre of European espionage. Then during the Third Reich the Germans appreciated the city as a place to gather intelligence about Southern and Eastern Europe. After World War II after division into four zones Vienna became a hotbed for agents, informants and double-agents. CIA and KGB agents were at the forefront of intelligence operations in Vienna. As long as they don't spy against Austria, intelligence officers are usually left alone." Beer added, "After the war Austria was full of refugees. Some informants were so desperate they sold intelligence for food or alcohol. When Austria became neutral in 1955 they pulled out a lot of personnel. But they made sure that a certain type of person stayed behind." Beer continued: "Spies continue to swap information and money here as a base to plan covert operations, acts of sabotage and killings. However, not only American and Russian agents played hard at the spying game. There was also a lot of tension between the secret services of Austria on the one hand and the intelligence operations of Czechoslovakia and other Eastern European countries." Today Vienna is an international city and Austrians are really friendly people.

Category: Austria / Vienna / US-Russian spy rings

Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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EXERCISES

1. The US-Russian spy swap: Briefly, what three things do you know about the recent US-Russian spy swap? Go round the room swapping details.

2. Geography: Austria: Where is Austria? What language do they speak in Austria? What is its capital? Draw a map on the board then **look on Google maps** to help you.

3. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - we need to do some work!

4. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

5. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. The article: Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

7. Let's think! Think of five examples of what spies do. Then add five famous spies. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these?

Five things a spy does	Five famous spies
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

8. Game: I spy with my little eye: In pairs/groups. "I spy with my little eye something beginning with..." (Look around you, choose something in the room then give the first letter) The other person/people have to guess what it is you are referring to.

9. Let's think: Spies! In pairs think of as many books, songs, and films that have '**spies**' in their title or are about '**spies**'. Write them on the board. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams.

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10. Let's talk! In a pub: *In pairs:* Imagine you are in a pub. The conversation gets onto: **The US-Russian spy swap.** Discuss. 5-minutes.

11. Pro's and Cons: Think of two advantages and disadvantages of being a spy. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these?

Advantages	Disadvantages
1	1
2	2

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

12. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the spy organisations.
- 2) Who is Siegfried Beer?
- 3) Name the classic spy book.
- 4) Name the spy.
- 5) What happened at the airport?

Student B

- 1) Why was Vienna used as a spy swap?
- 2) What happened after WW2?
- 3) Why did the intelligence service set up shop in Vienna?
- 4) Where was there 'a lot of tension'?
- 5) What do spies continue to do?

13. The spy swap in Vienna: In pairs/groups. Each person chooses to be one of the people listed below. You are at Vienna International airport during the spy swap. Create a short story about it. You just happened to be at the airport – but why were you there? Were you spying? Tell your story to your partner/group. Try to make it interesting, funny, the challenges etc... *Students can interact and interlink student storylines!*

1 A double agent	3 A US/Russian spy
2 Austrian intelligence officer	4 A TV reporter

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

14. Let's write! An e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **The US-Russian spy swap.** Your e-mail can be read out in class.

15. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) The spy's _____
- b) Vienna _____
- c) The swap _____

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DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What do you think of the CIA (USA) and FSB (Russian Secret Service)?
- 3) What do you know about MI6 and MI5 (UK)?
- 4) What do you think about this US-Russian spy case?
- 5) Why do countries spy on each other?
- 6) Do you think its right that governments can spy on their own population? If yes, why?
- 7) What other recent spy stories do you know?
- 8) What do you think of James Bond 007?
- 9) What will happen to the US-Russian spies at the centre of this major spy swap?
- 10) What will happen to the spies' children – who were born in another country to where they now live?

Student B questions

- 1) Would you like to have your phone tapped? Why? Why not?
- 2) Are you a spy?
- 3) Do you know any spies?
- 4) Are any of your friends spies?
- 5) Are you spied on in the office?
- 6) What three things make a good spy?
- 7) Would you like to be a spy? Why? Why not?
- 8) Do you think you can make a lot of money being a spy?
- 9) If you were a spy, which secret spy organisation would you work for and why?
- 10) Where do spies live?

SPEAKING

Let's debate! The US-Russian spy swap
Allow 10-15 minutes - Small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Debate the following together:-

The US-Russian spy swap

The teacher can moderate the session.

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GAP FILL: READING

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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Vienna – If you like cold war thrillers that involve cloak and (1)_____ type operations then the chances are you'll think of the Orson Wells classic *The Third Man*. We can add Ian Fleming's most famous spy *James Bond, 007*. In real life the Austrian capital recently saw one of the biggest spy swap operations in recent years take place at its international airport between Russia and the USA. But why Vienna? Well, according to the BBC it has a long history as a (2)_____ ground for secret services all over the world as the centre of spy swap (3)_____. Vienna is the capital of a neutral country in the heart of Europe. In fact, Austria has been a (4)_____ hub for more than a century. Indeed, even 20 years after the end of the Cold War (5)_____ and (6)_____ still feel at ease in this (7)_____ city. With the disintegration of the Austro Hungarian Empire and the political turmoil that followed this led to more and more (8)_____ services setting up shop in Vienna.

Siegfried Beer, historian and head of the Austrian Centre for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies: "All the services that were here during the Cold War have a presence in Vienna today." He added, "Between the wars Vienna (1)_____ became the centre of European (2)_____. Then during the Third Reich the Germans appreciated the city as a place to (3)_____ intelligence about Southern and Eastern Europe. After World War II after division into four (4)_____ Vienna became a (5)_____ for agents, informants and double-agents. (6)_____ and (7)_____ agents were at the forefront of (8)_____ operations in Vienna. As long as they don't spy against Austria, intelligence officers are usually left alone." Beer added, "After the war Austria was full of refugees. Some informants were so desperate they sold intelligence for food or alcohol. When Austria became neutral in 1955 they pulled out a lot of personnel. But they made sure that a certain type of person stayed behind."

agents

informants

spy

secret

operations

dagger

romantic

stomping

gather

CIA

definitely

espionage

zones

KGB

hotbed

intelligence

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GAP FILL: LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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GRAMMAR

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Siegfried Beer, historian and head of the Austrian Centre for Intelligence, Propaganda (1) Security Studies: "All the services that were here during the Cold War have (2) presence in Vienna today." (3) added, "Between the wars Vienna definitely became the centre of European espionage. Then during (4) Third Reich the Germans appreciated the city as a place to gather intelligence about Southern and Eastern Europe. After World War II after division into four zones Vienna became a hotbed for agents, informants and double-agents. CIA and KGB agents were at the forefront of intelligence operations in Vienna. As long as they don't spy against Austria, intelligence officers are usually left alone." Beer added, "After the war Austria was full (5) refugees. Some informants were (6) desperate they sold intelligence (7) food (8) alcohol. When Austria became neutral in 1955 they pulled out a lot of personnel. But they made sure that a certain type of person stayed behind."

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	intelligence	11	neutral
2	refugees	12	covert
3	turmoil	13	international
4	hub	14	thriller
5	propaganda	15	disintegration
6	dagger	16	espionage
7	informant	17	romantic
8	forefront	18	tension
9	sabotage	19	secret
10	desperate	20	Czechoslovakia

LINKS

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/us_and_canada/10564994.stm
<http://www.euronews.net/2010/07/08/speculation-abound-over-us-russia-spy-swap/> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcsyNpdxS1c>
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38162139/ns/us_news-security
http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100709/pl_afp/usrussiaspycourt
http://www.rferl.org/content/US_Russia_Go_Foward_With_Spy_Swap/2095293.html
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=10-russian-spies-deported-after-ny-guilty-pleas-2010-07-09>

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: I spy with my little eye...: Vienna – If you like cold war thrillers that involve cloak and **dagger** type operations then the chances are you'll think of the Orson Wells classic *The Third Man*. We can add Ian Fleming's most famous spy *James Bond, 007*. In real life the Austrian capital recently saw one of the biggest spy swap operations in recent years take place at its international airport between Russia and the USA. But why Vienna? Well, according to the BBC it has a long history as a **stomping** ground for secret services all over the world as the centre of spy swap **operations**. Vienna is the capital of a neutral country in the heart of Europe. In fact, Austria has been a **spy** hub for more than a century. Indeed, even 20 years after the end of the Cold War **agents** and **informants** still feel at ease in this **romantic** city. With the disintegration of the Austro Hungarian Empire and the political turmoil that followed this led to more and more **secret** services setting up shop in Vienna.

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