

READING AND WRITING

- 1 Look at the photos on pages 102–103. Which four phrases from the box describe the crime that the young man is committing?

steal someone's identity blackmail someone
 impersonate someone take someone hostage
 masquerade as someone
 assume a false identity

- 2 **Vocabulary** Match visuals a–f to sentences 1–6. Use a dictionary to help you. Which of the crimes does NOT involve getting money or property from someone by dishonest means?

- 1 The young man who said he was from the gas company swindled the old lady out of her life savings.
- 2 A local gang has defrauded more than one hundred people of thousands of pounds.
- 3 My sister paid a \$50 fee to an Internet company so that she could work at home for them, but it was all a scam: the company didn't even exist!
- 4 I think the signature on this certificate has been forged.
- 5 We discovered that the accountant had embezzled \$200,000 of the company's money.
- 6 I realised that the man wasn't a real insurance expert and that he had played a clever confidence trick on me.

- 3 In pairs, discuss these questions.

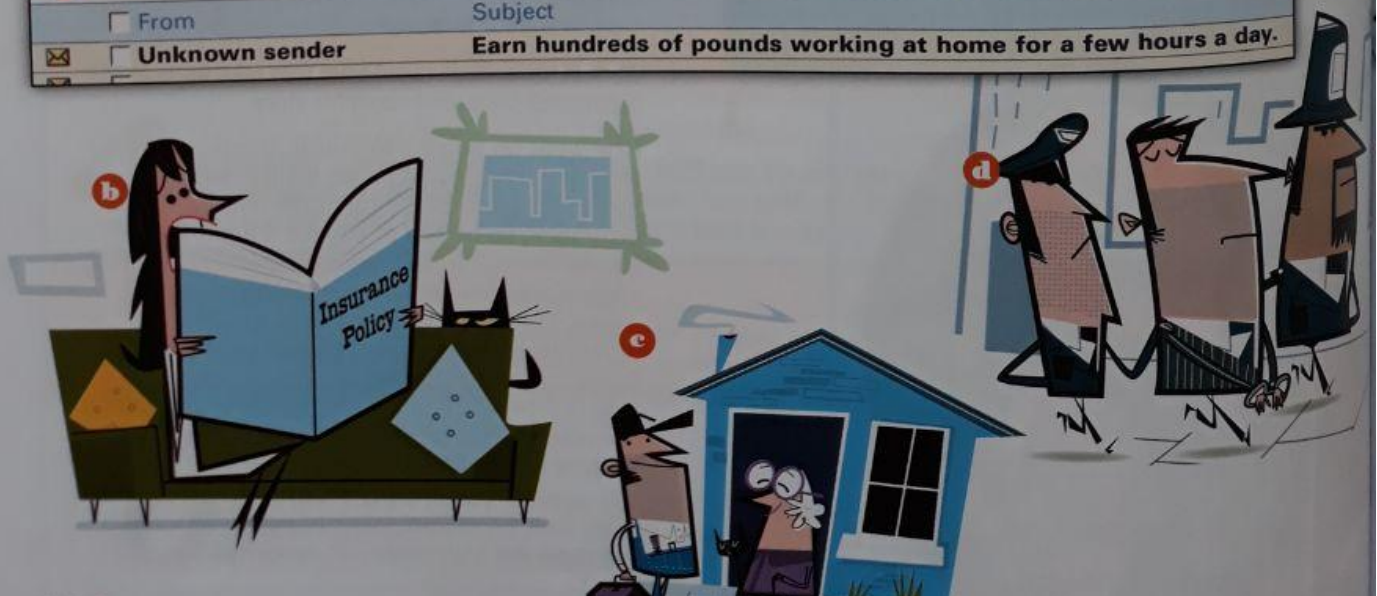
- 1 Which of the crimes in Exercises 1 and 2 are the most/least serious? Why?
- 2 What kind of personality do the people who commit these crimes have?

- 4 **CD ROM** Read the text on pages 102–103 and choose the correct answers.

- 1 What kind of text is it?
 a a news story c a biography
 b a report d a review
- 2 Why did the author write the text?
 a to entertain us
 b to inform and interest us
 c to warn us about identity theft
 d to surprise us
- 3 Which of the following crimes did Frank Abagnale NOT commit?
 a forgery c identity theft
 b fraud d hijacking
- 4 Which of the following statements is NOT true of Frank Abagnale?
 a He did not pass any exams.
 b People found him attractive.
 c He committed his crimes between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one.
 d He did not intend to harm people through his crimes.
- 5 What is the main point that the author is making?
 a Abagnale has always used his talents to make himself rich.
 b Identity theft poses a serious threat to society nowadays.
 c Abagnale is a very talented man who was misdirected when he was young.
 d The life of a criminal is not glamorous.
- 6 Look at the underlined words and phrases in the text and choose the best description of the author's attitude to Frank Abagnale.
 a He is amused by him.
 b He is critical of him.
 c He is sceptical about him.
 d He is impressed by him.

Show me mail from: Everyone

From	Subject
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown sender	Earn hundreds of pounds working at home for a few hours a day.





- 5 Put these events in Frank Abagnale's life in chronological order. Use the text to help you.
- a He changed his date of birth on his driving licence.
 - b He masqueraded as an airline pilot.
 - c He started his own consultancy company.
 - d He used his father's credit card to make money for himself.
 - e He was arrested and spent five years in prison in Europe.
 - f He ran away from home.
 - g He worked in a hospital and a university.
 - h He made \$40,000 by depositing other people's money into his bank account.

6 **Vocabulary** Use the context to help you guess the meaning of words 1–8 in the text. Then match them to synonyms a–h.

- 1 rooting for (line 3)
- 2 ingenious (line 25)
- 3 stunt (line 35)
- 4 credentials (line 42)
- 5 malicious (line 66)
- 6 perpetrating (line 67)
- 7 warrants (line 69)
- 8 legitimate (line 86)

- a qualifications
- b genuine
- c clever
- d committing
- e risky act
- f supporting
- g documents giving police particular powers
- h mean and cruel

7 Read the text again carefully and underline the information which supports the author's main point.

8 Which two summarising sentences 1–6 should NOT be included in a summary of *Frank Abagnale: from Fraud to FBI?* Why?

- 1 Abagnale's father shouldn't have let him use his credit card.
- 2 He took advantage of the fact that he looked older than his years.
- 3 His first successful scam was working out how to get other people's money into his bank account.
- 4 He is best-known for masquerading as a Pan Am pilot, despite the fact that he couldn't fly a plane.
- 5 He also assumed several other false identities, including that of a doctor, a teacher, a stockbroker, and even an FBI agent.
- 6 He has always claimed that he was an opportunist, and didn't have any malicious intentions while perpetrating his crimes.

9 Read **Train Your Brain** and check your answer to Exercise 8.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN | Writing skills

Summaries

- Start by naming the author and identifying the text type and the topic.
- State the author's main point and summarise the information which supports it, in your own words.
- Be objective: do not include your own opinions or thoughts on the subject.
- Once the summary is written, read and check it for accuracy.

10 Find three more pieces of information which should be in the summary but are not in Exercise 8.

11 Write a summary of the text in about 250 words, using **Train Your Brain** to help you. Then swap summaries with a partner and check each other's work for accuracy.

12 In groups, discuss these questions.

- What do you think of Frank Abagnale? Is the author of the biography too positive?
- Is Abagnale a suitable person to give advice on fraud? Would you trust him? Why?/ Why not?
- Why do criminals like Abagnale often seem attractive, despite their crimes?
- What other 'reformed' criminals can you think of, who have tried to do something positive for society?



Do not trust these men



FRANK ABAGNALE

FROM FRAUD TO FBI

BY BERNIE ALEXANDER



Ask any audience member of the hugely popular Spielberg film *Catch Me If You Can*, and they will probably admit that they were rooting for the young con artist. Although he was a criminal, Frank Abagnale was also a teenager who was simply too smart for his own good.

Born in 1948, Frank W. Abagnale was always a creative child. For example, he would buy items on his father's credit card only to sell them back to the shop for the cash. But his real life of crime began when his parents divorced. A judge wanted him to choose between living with his mother or father and that was a decision he wasn't able to make. So he ran away and never looked back. Because he was only sixteen years old, work was hard to come by in New York, the city he had escaped to. Luckily for him, he was six feet tall and his hair had begun to turn grey; he looked older than he really was. He changed a number on his driver's licence from a '4' to a '3' and all of a sudden he was ten years older.

With a total of \$100 to his name, he went into a bank to open an account. That's when he was first introduced to banking operation procedures. Being a new client, he did not have a cheque book with printed deposit slips in his name, so he had to use a blank deposit slip from a pile on the counter. And it was then that he had an ingenious idea: what if he took a handful of the slips home and printed his account number on them in magnetic ink, then returned them to the counter? Tempted to see what would happen with a scheme like that, he did it on impulse. The result was that every time someone made a deposit using these slips, the money went straight into Abagnale's own account. By the time the bank discovered the system, Abagnale had made over \$40,000 and already changed his identity.



Abagnale's most famous stunt was impersonating a Pan Am pilot for two years. At first, he did it so he could travel around the world for free – although he had no idea how to fly. He would simply introduce himself at the airline counter, saying he needed a ride, and fly back using the spare seat behind the pilot. Everything, including his food and lodging, was billed to Pan Am. As far as credentials went, all he needed was a uniform and an identification card. For the former, he simply contacted the airline headquarters and made up a story about how his uniform had been lost, and they outlined the course of action for him. For the latter, he requested a sample with his name and picture from a company specialising in ID cards, and used a transfer of the Pan Am logo from a model plane to give authenticity to the card. He became known as 'The Skywayman'.

Over five years, he assumed the identities of Frank Williams, Robert Conrad, Frank Adams and Robert Monjo – Abagnale managed to forge and cash cheques for a total of \$2.5 million

Using the same remarkable skills, he forged a Harvard Law diploma and managed to pass the bar exam of Louisiana, enabling him to get a job in a state attorney general's office. Impersonating a paediatrician, he became the temporary resident supervisor at a Georgia hospital. He also taught Sociology at Brigham Young University for a term (thanks to a false Columbia University degree), and masqueraded as a stockbroker and an FBI agent. The best part of all was that he didn't even have a high-school diploma! Over five years, he assumed the identities of Frank Williams, Robert Conrad, Frank Adams and Robert Monjo – Abagnale managed to forge and cash cheques for a total of \$2.5 million. This money was used to support his lifestyle, which in turn was designed to make him seem more attractive. He has always claimed that he was an opportunist, and didn't have any malicious intentions while perpetrating his crimes.

Before long, he had defrauded people in all fifty states of the USA and twenty-six foreign countries. Warrants were issued for his arrest all over the world. After five years of these escapades, the law finally caught up with Frank Abagnale. When he was twenty-one, an Air France flight

attendant recognised him from a wanted poster and the French authorities arrested him. He served a total of five years in prison in France, Sweden and finally the United States, where he was sentenced to twelve years. In 1974, the federal government approached him and offered him a deal; they released him on the condition that he would help the authorities, without payment, to understand the inner workings of fraud and confidence tricks.

After his release, Abagnale tried several jobs, but found them unsatisfying, so he approached a bank with an offer. He explained who he was and what he had done, and offered to speak to the staff and show them the various tricks he had used to defraud banks. Naturally, they were impressed, and he began a legitimate career as a consultant. He later founded Abagnale & Associates, which advises financial institutions and law enforcement agencies on how to prevent the same crimes he so brilliantly committed. More than 14,000 financial institutions and law enforcement agencies use his fraud prevention programmes, and he has become one of the world's most respected authorities on forgery, embezzlement and other forms of white-collar crime. He is now a multi-millionaire, and has willingly paid back all the money he stole. He is also a regular speaker on the conference circuit, and was voted the No 1 Campus Speaker in America by the National Entertainment College Conference Association.

Abagnale admits that life on the run was lonely, and not as glamorous as it is sometimes portrayed in Hollywood. Now a family man, he regrets his past and confesses that although he still gets ideas about interesting scams, he would never act on them. He is certain the crime of the future will be identity theft and that today's technology makes it a lot easier. He claims that today he could flip open a slim laptop, power up a small printer and have access to your personal and financial information within five or ten minutes – all thanks to the Internet. His new mission in life is to convince the world of it.

