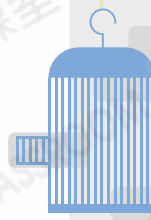


6

Turning over
a new leaf

READ ALONG

PLAYLIST

Level: 

Let's think!

1. What challenges do former offenders face when they are released?
2. How can we help former offenders?

PRISON

Beyond bars

1 Ming had never thought he was going to make one mistake that would change his life so dramatically for the worse.

2 'You'll get \$50,000 if you just sneak this bag of crack over to my friend across the border,' Tony tried to lure Ming into becoming a drug mule. 5

3 At first, Ming told Tony that he was getting out of the game.

4 'You useless, ungrateful man. People are lining up to get this job. It's just a short flight. Think of the things you can do with the money. If you don't feel up to doing it, we'll call it quits. It's your call,' Tony snapped.

5 As Tony spoke, all Ming could think of was his poor mother, whose life was turned upside down. 10

6 Since the tragedy, she had fallen into a state of deep depression. She never stopped grieving—she barely left home and was always drowning in a sea of tears. Being the only child in the family, Ming had to take on the role of the sole breadwinner. As if things had not been devastating enough, his late father's loan sharks had started to bully them.

7 Ming, an early school leaver, was caught in the middle of all these. Without him noticing, he slipped into a downward spiral. 15

8 'Okay. I'll take the job, but I want the money up front,' said Ming with a shaky voice.

9 On the plane, he kept asking himself why he had agreed to this deal. He could have done something much less dangerous to earn the same amount, if not more. 20
Ming himself did not have the answer. It just felt like something was pushing him to the point of no return, up until he was held up at the customs checkpoint.



9 'Sir, stay where you are. We found this in your bag ...' the customs officer at the airport stopped Ming and confronted him.

10 Ming was caught red-handed. After two years in police custody, 25 Ming was sentenced to jail for 20 years.

11 By the time Ming was released from prison, he no longer had family or friends. His mother passed away years before his release. Ming was desperate to find a job and a roof over his head, but to no avail. Ming was down-and-out when his caseworker introduced 30 him to his future employer.

12 The day Ming met Mr Wu was just like any other day. Even though he did not have much expectation after being turned down for jobs so many times, Ming still showed up in his most presentable suit. Wringing his sweaty hands, Ming turned around when he heard soft footsteps. Behind him was a man with gentle eyes and a genuine smile. The meeting was surreal to Ming—he told Mr Wu the whole 35 story and the kind man gave him the job right away despite his criminal records.

13 'Ming! Go get me a plate!' shouted the sous chef.

14 'Ming! I need diced garlic, not sliced, you idiot!' shouted the head chef.

15 Ming always got yelled at doing things wrong but he was not frustrated. Even though the chefs were harsh, they actually showed him tough love. Every night in the dim and quiet kitchen, sounds 40 of chopping and stir-frying echoed around. Ming always stayed behind to experiment with different cooking skills ...

16 Ming never forgot the day when he was asked to replace the retiring head chef. At the farewell party, Mr Wu, the chefs and Ming reminisced about their nights working together on a dish—the signature of their restaurant. 'Son, we're so proud of you ...' the chef gave a toast sincerely, holding his apprentice's 45 hands. Tears began to fill Ming's eyes as he thanked his mentor's unwavering trust and support.

17 'Adversity introduces a man to himself'. Ming looked at the plaque with Mr Wu's motto hanging in the middle of the restaurant. This positive can-do attitude helped him survive tough times. Ming opened his scarred and wrinkled palms. They reminded him that the past was real. They told the stories of his turbulent life. 50

~680 words

Looking into Grammar

Some verbs can be followed by either gerunds or to-infinitives, carrying different meanings.

✓ She never **stopped** *grieving* (✗ *to grieve*) ...

Some verbs can be followed by either gerunds or to-infinitives, carrying similar meanings.

✓ ... his late father's loan sharks **had started** *to bully* (✓ *bullying*) them.

? Underline a verb in paragraph 16 which is followed by either a gerund or a to-infinitive with no difference in meaning.

Read the text and answer questions 1–14. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (29 marks)

1. (i) What was the 'game' (line 6) mentioned in paragraph 3?

(ii) Was this 'game' common? Explain your answer.

2. What does the phrase 'call it quits' (line 8) mean?

2 Choose the option that reflects Tony's attitude.

- A. to think of another method
 - B. to forgive each other
 - C. to choose another easy task
 - D. to stop doing the thing mentioned
- A B C D

3. Find a phrase in paragraphs 5–7 which describes the situation was worsening and difficult to control because one bad event led to another.

4. (i) Read paragraph 5. List THREE reasons why Ming needed money desperately. (3 marks)

Reason 1: _____

Reason 2: _____

Reason 3: _____

(ii) Quote a line in paragraphs 5–7 which shows that Ming asked for money before he started working.

(iii) How much money did Ming get for the deal? _____

5. Find a phrase in paragraphs 8–11 which means that it was no longer possible for Ming to stop what he was doing or avoid its consequence.

6. What does 'caught red-handed' (line 25) mean?

- A. asked to admit to a crime
 - B. caught with a pair of red hands
 - C. arrested when doing something illegal
 - D. suspected of taking drugs
- A B C D

7. How long was Ming held in prison? _____

8. Complete the summary of paragraph 11 by writing ONE word in each blank. Note that the suitable word may not appear in the text. Your answers must be grammatically correct.

Ming had almost (i) _____ when he

(ii) _____ out of jail.

8 When a person is *down-and-out* (line 30), he has no luck, no money, and no opportunities.

9. Find a phrase in paragraphs 11–12 which shows that Ming was not successful in getting what he needed after his release from jail.
- _____

10. Complete the summary of paragraph 12 by writing the given words in the spaces provided. Each word can be used ONCE only.

brothers excited equal gentle like nervous presentable unlike

Ming was not (i) _____ about the interview as he had got used to rejections. He started to become (ii) _____ as Mr Wu was getting closer. Ming was surprised when he found that Mr Wu was (iii) _____ other employers. He treated him as an (iv) _____.

11. Determine whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG).

	T	F	NG
(i) Ming's mother used to work before her husband's death.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(ii) Mr Wu trusted Ming from the very beginning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) Ming did not get along with his co-workers in the restaurant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iv) The signature dish was invented by Ming.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. How would you describe Ming? Explain your answer based on the text.
- _____
- _____
- _____

13. Match each of the following speech bubbles with the characters in the novel extract. Write the correct letter in the circle.

A. Ming's father

B. Ming's mother

C. Mr Wu

D. Tony

(i) He was gone. I can't move on ...

(ii) I'm sorry for the hurt I caused you two.

(iii) You don't have to do it if you don't want to.

(iv) I have your back, son!

14. The tone of this novel extract is _____.

- A. inspirational
B. regretful
C. light-hearted
D. persuasive

A B C D

Vocabulary

GLOSSARY



A. Complete the story below with the given words. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

apprentice (*n.*)

call it quits (*idm.*)

deal (*n.*)

down-and-out (*adj.*)

feel up to (*phr. v.*)

grieve (*v.*)

lure (*v.*)

surreal (*adj.*)

turn (something) upside down (*idm.*)

unwavering (*adj.*)

Going astray

A young man's single decision (1) _____ his life _____ into something (2) _____, something that he had never imagined.

Eric, who was in his early twenties, did not get along with his parents and always wanted to move out. He then started to work as a / an (3) _____ at a hairdresser's to make money. John, a colleague of Eric, was a gang member. He kept (4) _____ Eric into collecting protection money from street vendors. At first, Eric flatly refused as he was not (5) _____. He had a job and a home. Why did he need to take the risk? However, seeing that John's lifestyle was becoming more and more lavish, Eric was not as (6) _____ as he was before.

'Sometimes I just don't (7) _____ working,' thought Eric. 'With this easy money, I can buy whatever I want.' Finally, Eric was in.

One day, the two young men grabbed money from an old vendor. To their surprise, the vendor chased after them and was killed in a car crash. Right after the accident, John offered Eric a / an (8) _____—Eric kept the accident secret and John would let him join his gang to make more money. However, Eric could not help (9) _____ over the tragedy. He just wanted to (10) _____ ...



B. Look at the pictures. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

Common crimes

child abuse

drink driving

drug trafficking

internet fraud

loitering

shoplifting

tax evasion

vandalism



1. _____



2. _____



3. _____



4. _____



5. _____



6. _____



7. _____



8. _____

Writing

How can society help ex-criminals rehabilitate?

Write an article to express your views in about 200 words.