Under The Sand

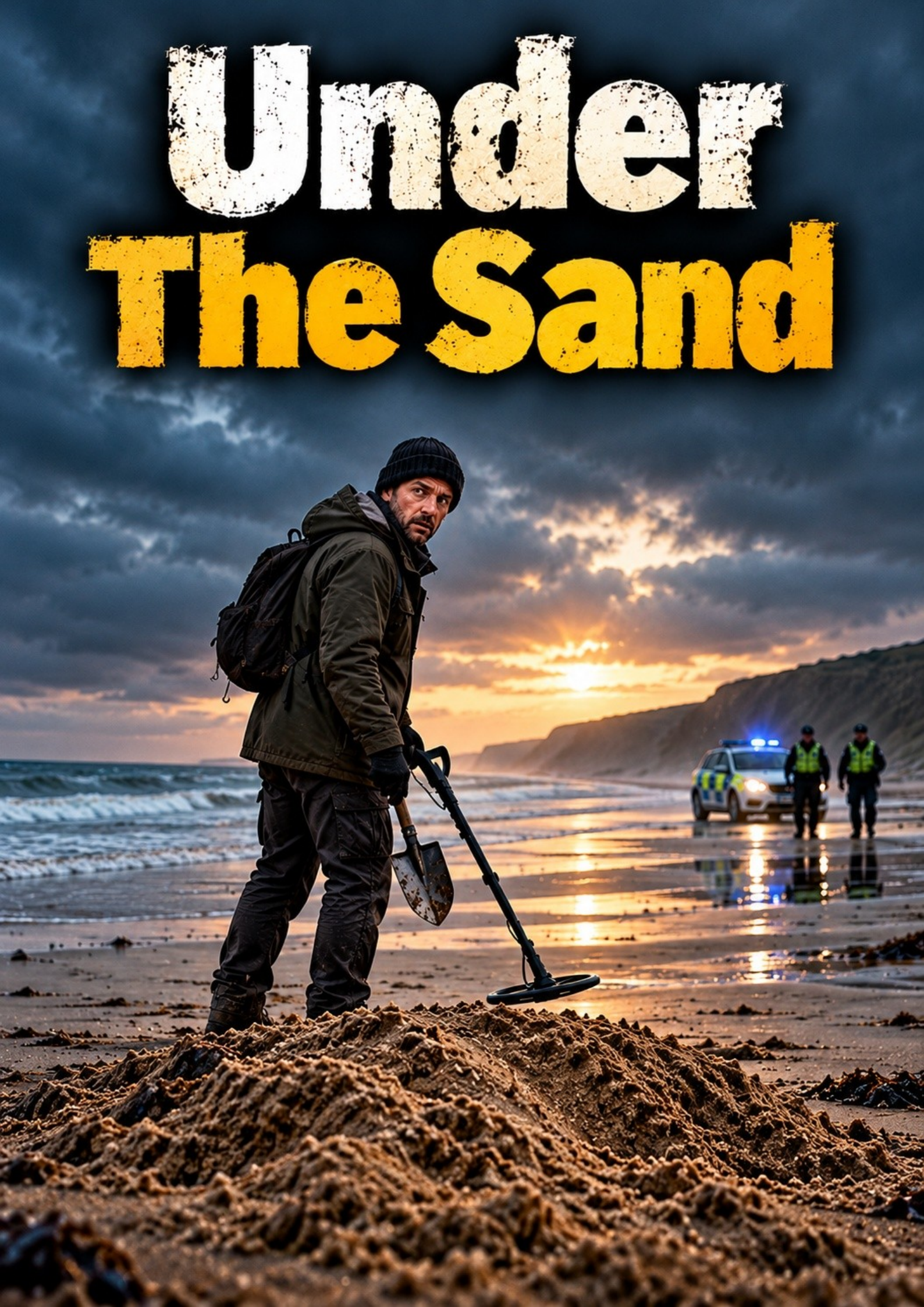


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Introductory Questions

1. What is a metal detector?
2. Is metal detecting popular in your country?
3. What kind of people like metal detecting?
4. What kinds of things can metal detectors find?

Under The Sand

No one understood what he did.

No one really got it.

But Simon knew. He knew the value of it.

He moved his metal detector slowly from side to side, keeping it just above the sand. Each movement was careful and precise. He had been doing this for years, and he knew exactly what he was doing.

His father used to laugh at him.

“Found any buried treasure today, Simon?”

If Simon came home empty-handed, his father made jokes. If he found something interesting, his father barely looked at it.

Simon had learnt not to expect much from people.

He preferred being alone.

Over the years, he had found rings, watches and old coins. Some were worth quite a bit of money. He had certainly earned back everything he had spent on equipment.

His latest detector, the MetalPro 3000, had cost a small fortune. He had ordered it from America.

It was one of the best machines available.

He had posted pictures of it on an online metal-detecting

forum. Several members had congratulated him. Others had said nothing.

Simon suspected they were jealous.

Those people on the forum were the closest thing he had to friends.

And now, as usual, he was alone on a deserted beach.

It was the middle of winter. A bitter wind blew in from the sea, carrying fine grains of sand across the empty shore. Dark clouds were gathering on the horizon.

Simon pulled his scarf tighter around his neck.

He had been searching for nearly two hours. So far, he had found five one-pound coins, a broken watch and several old drinks cans.

People had no respect for the environment.

He was considering heading back to his car when his detector suddenly beeped.

Simon stopped.

That was unusual.

He moved the detector over the same patch of sand.

Another signal. Long and deep.

He frowned.

Whatever was buried down there was much larger than a coin.

He lowered his detector onto the sand, removed his backpack and took out his folding shovel.

Then he began to dig.

The first few inches were easy. Beneath them, the sand was wet and tightly packed.

He dug deeper.

Suddenly, his shovel struck something hard.

Metal.

Simon knelt and brushed away the sand with his gloved hands.

A thick chain appeared.

He pulled at it, but it wouldn't move.

He dug around it, uncovering something wrapped in blue tarpaulin. The chain had been wound tightly around the material.

Simon stared at it.

What on earth was this?

He continued digging.

The object was long. Almost six feet.

A strange feeling passed through him.

He stopped for a moment and looked towards the sea.

There was nobody around.

He turned back to the tarpaulin.

Carefully, he pulled at one corner.

Something pale appeared beneath it.

At first, he couldn't understand what he was looking at.

Then he saw an ear.

And a face.

Simon fell backwards onto the sand.

It was a man.

A dead man.

His eyes were open, cloudy and lifeless. His mouth hung slightly open.

Simon stared in horror.

Then he noticed the man's throat.

A deep wound ran across his neck. Dark, dried blood covered the skin beneath it.

Simon scrambled to his feet.

“Oh my god.”

He backed away.

For several seconds, he couldn't move. He could only stare at the body lying in the sand.

He had found a murdered man.

He had to call the police.

Of course he did.

He reached into his coat pocket and pulled out his phone.

His fingers were shaking.

Then he stopped.

What would he tell them?

That he had been digging on a deserted beach and had found a dead body?

They would ask questions.

Lots of questions.

Why had he come here? Why was he alone? Why had he been digging in that particular spot?

Simon hated questions.

He remembered being seventeen and getting stopped by two police officers outside a shopping centre. Someone had reported a boy stealing from a nearby shop.

Simon hadn't stolen anything.

But the officers had questioned him anyway.

He had become so nervous that he could barely speak. His answers had sounded confused and suspicious.

Eventually, they had let him go.

He still remembered the way they had looked at him.

As though he were lying.

Now he looked down at the body.

This was far worse.

A murdered man.

And Simon was standing beside him, holding a shovel.

He imagined sitting in a police interview room, trying to explain himself.

He imagined the officers exchanging looks.

He imagined them asking the same questions again and again.

His breathing became faster.

No.

He couldn't do it.

He looked along the beach in both directions.

Empty.

The light was fading. Soon it would be dark.

Nobody knew he was here.

Nobody had seen him arrive.

He looked down at his phone.

Then he put it back into his pocket.

He could just leave.

But the body was exposed now. Someone might find it tomorrow. The police would search the beach.

They might discover his footprints. His shovel marks.

He had touched the chain. The tarpaulin.

Simon swallowed.

He had made a terrible mistake.

He should never have started digging.

He picked up his shovel.

For a moment, he stood motionless.

Then he began pushing sand back over the body.

He worked quickly, almost desperately.

The dead man's face disappeared beneath the sand. Then the blue tarpaulin. Then the chain.

Simon kept digging until everything was covered.

He knew what he was doing was wrong.

He knew he should stop.

But he couldn't.

He just wanted everything to be the way it had been twenty minutes earlier.

Before the signal.

Before the chain.

Before the dead man's face.

At last, he stopped.

His arms ached. Sweat ran down his back despite the freezing wind.

He stood looking at the disturbed sand.

There was nothing to see now.

Nothing except a slightly raised patch near the dunes.

He told himself the wind would smooth it over. The rain would come. Perhaps the tide would reach this far.

Soon there would be no sign that anyone had been digging.

Simon packed away his shovel.

He picked up the MetalPro 3000 and switched it off.

Then he started walking towards the road.

He didn't look back.

The sky was growing darker. The wind whistled across the empty beach.

He walked faster.

Almost there.

He could get into his car, drive home and forget the whole thing.

Nobody would ever know.

As he climbed the path towards the road, he saw a vehicle parked near the entrance.

A police car.

Simon stopped.

Had it been there before?

Two officers stood beside it.

One was speaking into a radio.

The other was looking directly at him.

Simon felt his stomach tighten.

The officer raised a hand.

“Sir! Could you come over here, please?”

Simon froze.

Perhaps they were looking for someone.

Perhaps they already knew about the body.

Perhaps someone had seen him digging.

“Sir?”

Simon glanced towards the road.

Could he run?

No. That would make everything worse.

The officer began walking towards him.

“Stay where you are, please.”

Simon stood motionless.

His mind filled with explanations.

He was just doing some metal detecting.

He had been doing it for years.

The MetalPro 3000 was an expensive machine. One of the best. He had ordered it from America.

And the shovel?

Everyone who went metal detecting carried a shovel.

That was perfectly normal.

He hadn't done anything wrong.

Well, not really.

He was a metal detectorist.

Not a murderer.

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. Who is the main character in this story?
2. Where does the story take place?
3. What is the main character doing at the beginning of the story?
4. What is Simon's hobby?
5. Does he like this hobby?
6. What tools does he use for this hobby?
7. How long has he been doing this?
8. What do other people think about his interest?
9. What does Simon's father think about his hobby?
10. In the past, what has Simon found while metal detecting?
11. What is the model name of his new metal-detecting machine?
12. Where did he have to order it from?
13. Who are the closest thing Simon has to friends?
14. How do the people on the metal-detecting forum react to his new machine?
15. In the story, what has Simon found so far on the beach?
16. How is the weather on the beach in the story?
17. What two signals does Simon's detector make that catch his

attention?

18. What does Simon realise about the size of the buried object?

19. What does he have in his backpack?

20. What does Simon find buried beneath the sand?

21. Is Simon shocked by what he sees there?

22. Is Simon alone on the beach? Or are there other people around?

23. What time of day is it? How do you know?

24. Why does Simon hesitate to call the police? What happened to him when he was seventeen?

25. What does Simon do with the body under the sand?

26. What does Simon plan to do?

27. What does Simon hope will hide the signs that he has been digging?

28. What does Simon see on the road?

29. How many people are there?

30. How does the story end?

Essential Vocabulary

value	metal detector	precise
empty-handed	equipment	small fortune
forum	congratulated	jealous
deserted	bitter	horizon
scarf	grains	gathering
beep	signal	frowned
folding	shovel	tightly packed
gloved	chain	tarpaulin
uncovering	pale	lifeless
throat	wound	scrambled
murdered	shaking	questioned
nervous	suspicious	interview
exposed	footprints	evidence
desperately	motionless	dunes
disturbed	fading	murderer

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Precise — exact and careful about details.

Value — *the worth, importance or usefulness of something.*

Then write a sentence of your own that uses the new word or phrase correctly.

She made a precise measurement before cutting the wood.

This book my grandfather gave me has a lot of personal value.

Do this with all the vocabulary and, over time, this will help improve all your English skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening.

True or False?

Look at all the statements below about the story.

Say if they are true or false.

Simon hates metal detecting.

Simon has been doing metal detecting for years.

Other people could not understand it.

Simon's father encouraged him to do metal detecting.

Simon found rings, watches and some old coins.

He had lost a lot of money on metal detecting.

The name of his new machine is the MetalDro 3000.

He ordered this machine from Australia.

The people on the online forum are the closest thing Simon has to friends.

He is a member of an online chat forum about metal detecting.

In the story, Simon is in a forest.

So far in the story, Simon has found a watch and some coins.

It is wintertime in the story.

Simon knows he has found something because his machine makes a loud noise.

Simon remembers being questioned by police when he was seventeen.

Simon takes out a trowel from his backpack.

While digging, he finds a chain.

And below that, something wrapped in plastic.

He continues digging and finds a dead body.

Simon is shocked by what he has discovered.

The sun is rising.

Simon's father used to laugh at his metal-detecting hobby.

Simon covers the body with sand.

Simon plans to go and tell the police.

Simon is certain that the tide will wash away all evidence of his digging.

Simon sees an ambulance on the beach road.

A police officer tells Simon to be careful.

Simon is worried at the end of the story.

Now check your answers at the end of the lesson plan!

Words and Meanings

Look at the table below.
Match each of the words to the correct meaning.

The answers are at the end of the lesson plan.

precise	able to be bent or closed to take up less space
equipment	not moving
deserted	making someone think something may be wrong
folding	gradually becoming weaker or less bright
motionless	facts or signs that help show what happened
suspicious	exact and careful about details
fading	tools or other items needed for an activity
evidence	empty, with nobody around

Check your answers at the end of the lesson!

Match the Synonyms

Look at the table of synonyms below. Match the correct synonyms together.

The answers are at the end of the lesson plan.

equipment	exact
murderer	empty
froze	dead
precise	dimming
deserted	still
lifeless	tools
fading	killer
motionless	stopped moving

Check your answers at the end of the lesson!

Match the Antonyms

Look at the table of antonyms below. Match the correct antonyms together.

The answers are at the end of the lesson plan.

value	full
broken	loose
nervous	shallow
empty	right
tight	bright
deep	worthlessness
wrong	undamaged
dark	calm

Check your answers at the end of the lesson!

Discussion Questions

1. In your own words, give a summary of this story.

2. Is metal detecting popular in your country?

3. What kind of people like metal detecting?

4. Are these people strange? Why/why not?

5. What is the appeal of metal detecting? Why do people do it?

6. What kinds of things can people find by metal detecting?

7. Do people find very valuable things do you think? What kinds of things?

8. What are the most common things that people can find?

9. If a metal detectorist found a valuable but ancient object, would they have to hand it over to the authorities? Or keep it?

10. Where are the best places to go metal detecting? Why?

11. Are metal detectorists a danger to the environment?

12. In the story, Simon finds a dead body. What do you think he should have done upon discovering it?

13. What would you have done?

14. Why did he react the way he did?

15. Why does Simon remember his earlier encounter with the police? Do you think the officers will suspect him of murder?

16. What explanation could Simon give the officers? Why might he struggle to explain himself?

17. Simon knows burying the body again is wrong. Why does he do it? Could the story end well or badly for him?

Role Play

This is a role play activity.

There are three people in this role play.

Simon from the main story.

Detective 1 — investigating the murder of the body found under the sand.

Detective 2 — investigating the murder of the body found under the sand.

The Situation

Simon has been arrested for the possible murder of the person found buried on the beach.

He is now in the police station and two detectives on the murder case wish to talk to him.

They have many questions to ask him to try to see if he is guilty or not.

If they have enough evidence or ideas to suggest that Simon is guilty then they will charge him with murder.

If not they will let him go.

Of course, Simon knows he is innocent. So he has to try to prove that.

He gives his version of events as best he can so that he can walk

free from the police station.

In groups of three prepare your role play.

When you are ready, show the class!

Debate

This is a debate activity.

There are two teams in the debate activity. These two teams must have the same number of people.

Choose one person in the class to act as chairperson. The chairperson should ensure there is order during the debate and allow every person in the two groups to speak.

The Situation

Many metal detectorists come to Hidden Beach.

It used to be a reasonably quiet place but now every weekend; it is filled with people metal detecting.

It has got to a point that by Sunday evening, the entire beach is filled full of potholes left behind by the metal detectorists.

Some people in the town have had enough and want this to stop.

But others say that the metal detectorists add a lot of economic value to the local area.

The debate continues…

Group A

You have really had enough of the metal detectorists. You don't

want them to come to the beach anymore.

In fact, you want them banned.

They ruin the beach for other visitors.

They dig up big holes which affects the natural environment of the beach.

And if they find anything of little to no value, they leave it on the beach.

They provide no real value to Hidden Beach and we should therefore ban them!

Group B

The metal detectorists come to Hidden Beach all year round.

They come during the very quiet winter months.

This is a time when the economy of the town is very low. So we should welcome them with open arms at this time.

They are usually very quiet.

They are not rowdy or loud like other visitors.

The metal detectorists provide much-needed economic value to the town and so we should encourage them to come.

In your groups, prepare the things you want to say.

Think about your lines of argument, and what you want to say during the debate.

Then, when you are ready, begin the debate!

Look What I Found!

This is a show-and-tell activity.

In the class, you should have the following items.

- a coat hanger
- a plastic doll
- a key ring
- an old USB memory stick
- a disposable lighter
- a sock

You can also bring in any other ordinary, day-to-day items.

Metal Detecting on The Beach

All of you have been to the beach. You went there with your metal detectors and you all found some very strange and wonderful artefacts.

Now you want to present these incredible found objects to the class.

The Process

Step 1

All the students look at all the items. Each student should pick the items up and hold them.

Step 2

The students sit down and, using a pen and paper, write down an introduction of the object they wish to talk about.

You must create the illusion that the object in your hands is ancient and extremely valuable.

Step 3

Each student stands up to make a short presentation.
The other students ask questions.

Now take your time to prepare your presentations for the class.
Your teacher could give you an example of what to talk about in your presentation.

When you are ready, show the class!

Writing

This is a writing exercise.

You are a metal detectorist. You are going on a field trip with some other metal detectorists.

Maybe you go to a beach or a forest or a field in the countryside.

While searching for anything of value, you come across an item that looks very old. It could be a coin, an old sword, or some other artefact.

Describe the events that take place. From being on the train or bus as you are on your way to the chosen place for metal detecting to finding the ancient artefact and your feelings once you find it.

Write a page as if it is an entry in your journal or diary.

When you have finished, read your story out to the class!

True or False? — Answers

The answers are below.

Simon hates metal detecting. False

Simon has been doing metal detecting for years. True.

Other people could not understand it. True.

Simon's father encouraged him to do metal detecting. False.

Simon found rings, watches and some old coins. True.

He had lost a lot of money on metal detecting. False.

The name of his new machine is the MetalDro 3000. False.

He ordered this machine from Australia. False.

The people on the online forum are the closest thing Simon has to friends. True.

He is a member of an online chat forum about metal detecting. True.

In the story, Simon is in a forest. False.

So far in the story, Simon has found a watch and some coins. True.

It is wintertime in the story. True.

Simon knows he has found something because his machine

makes a loud noise. True.

Simon remembers being questioned by police when he was seventeen. True.

Simon takes out a trowel from his backpack. False.

While digging, he finds a chain. True.

And below that, something wrapped in plastic. False.

He continues digging and finds a dead body. True.

Simon is shocked by what he has discovered. True.

The sun is rising. False.

Simon's father used to laugh at his metal-detecting hobby. True.

Simon covers the body with sand. True.

Simon plans to go and tell the police. False.

Simon is certain that the tide will wash away all evidence of his digging. False.

Simon sees an ambulance on the beach road. False.

A police officer tells Simon to be careful. False.

Simon is worried at the end of the story. True.

How many did you get right?

Words and Meanings — Answers

These are the correct answers.

precise — exact and careful about details.

equipment — tools or other items needed for an activity.

deserted — empty, with nobody around.

folding — able to be bent or closed to take up less space.

motionless — not moving.

suspicious — making someone think something may be wrong.

fading — gradually becoming weaker or less bright.

evidence — facts or signs that help show what happened.

Did you get them all correct?

Match the Synonyms — Answers

These are the correct answers.

equipment	tools
murderer	killer
froze	stopped moving
precise	exact
deserted	empty
lifeless	dead
fading	dimming
motionless	still

How did you do?

Match the Antonyms — Answers

These are the correct answers.

value	worthlessness
broken	undamaged
nervous	calm
empty	full
tight	loose
deep	shallow
wrong	right
dark	bright

How many did you get right?

Credits

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