



Slippery (C1 Advanced)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. The protagonist of the story is described as a “slippery character”. What do you think this says about his/her behaviour?
2. Can you think of any characters in books or films that you would describe as “slippery”?
3. If so, who? Why?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Slippery risked dying soon after being born.
2. He/She often got into fights at school.
3. He/She was good at inventing excuses for his/her behaviour.
4. He/She avoided paying taxes but was otherwise an honest person.
5. He/She first met Bernard when they worked together in a restaurant.
6. Slippery followed Bernard because he/she intended to rob him.
7. Bernard had been hired to trace Slippery.
8. He tied Slippery up and locked him/her in a cellar.
9. Slippery managed to escape.
10. After that, Slippery decided never to see Bernard again.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why did the midwife drop Slippery soon after he/she was born?
2. How did Slippery’s parents feel about their relationship with him/her?
3. How did Slippery avoid being traced by former employers?
4. What made Slippery notice Bernard?
5. How did Bernard trap Slippery?
6. Who had hired Bernard?
7. Why was Slippery able to escape?
8. What did Slippery do before running away from the scene?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from plural to singular.)

1. Dan hated going to school because there was a _____ in his class who kept tormenting him.
2. Our car’s great for camping holidays. It’s got a big _____ that can hold lots of luggage.
3. If you water a plant too often, its _____ will die because they won’t have enough oxygen.
4. The cat’s in the bedroom again. He must have _____ in when we weren’t looking.
5. I don’t like walking home alone because I have to go down a dark _____ to get to my flat.
6. The jeweller _____ over his glasses at the emerald ring.

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test? (Reading and Use of English, Part 4)

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. Use between 3 and 6 words including the word given.

Example: The thick carpet in my parents' bedroom saved my life.

OWE I owe my life to the thick carpet in my parents' bedroom.

1. I've been a slippery character all my life.

DAY I've been a slippery character _____ born.

2. It was impossible to throw me into the air and catch me.

WAS Throwing me into the air and catching me _____ question.

3. I was slippery and my tongue was slippery too.

AS My tongue _____ rest of me.

4. Bernard didn't look awkward or isolated.

NOR Bernard _____ isolated.

5. He put his hands round my neck and lifted me off my feet.

GRABBED He _____ the neck and lifted me off my feet.

6. He said there were some people who wished to speak to me.

WORD "There are some people who'd _____ you," he said.

F – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

1. Do you think Slippery is a man or a woman? Why?

2. Have you come across many people like Slippery?

3. Which do you think is more important in the development of a person's character? Their genes? Their upbringing? Their life experiences?

4. Why do you think so?

Answers: Slippery (C1)

B – Listen and answer

1. T 2. F – Slippery was never involved in any physical altercations at school. 3. T 4. F – Besides avoiding taxes, he/she was a part-time thief. 5. F – They didn't work together. Bernard was a customer. 6. F – Slippery wanted to get to know Bernard. 7. T 8. F – Bernard locked Slippery up in the boot of his car in a garage. 9. T 10. F – Slippery wants to slip back into Bernard's life.

C – Read and answer

1. Because Slippery wriggled and slipped out of her hands. 2. They were worried because they couldn't show their affection in any tangible way, like hugging. 3. By giving a false name and address to all of them. 4. Bernard was alone but, unlike most of the single diners, he was not looking at his smartphone. 5. He attracted Slippery's attention on three or four occasions. Then he waited for Slippery to follow him into an alley and grabbed him/her. 6. People that Slippery had robbed or swindled. 7. Because he/she had been a circus escapologist. 8. He/She watched from the roof of a neighbouring garage while Bernard opened the boot of the car.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. bully 2. boot 3. roots 4. slipped back 5. alley 6. peered

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test?

1. since the day I was 2. was out of the 3. was as slippery as the 4. looked neither awkward nor 5. grabbed me by 6. like to have a word with