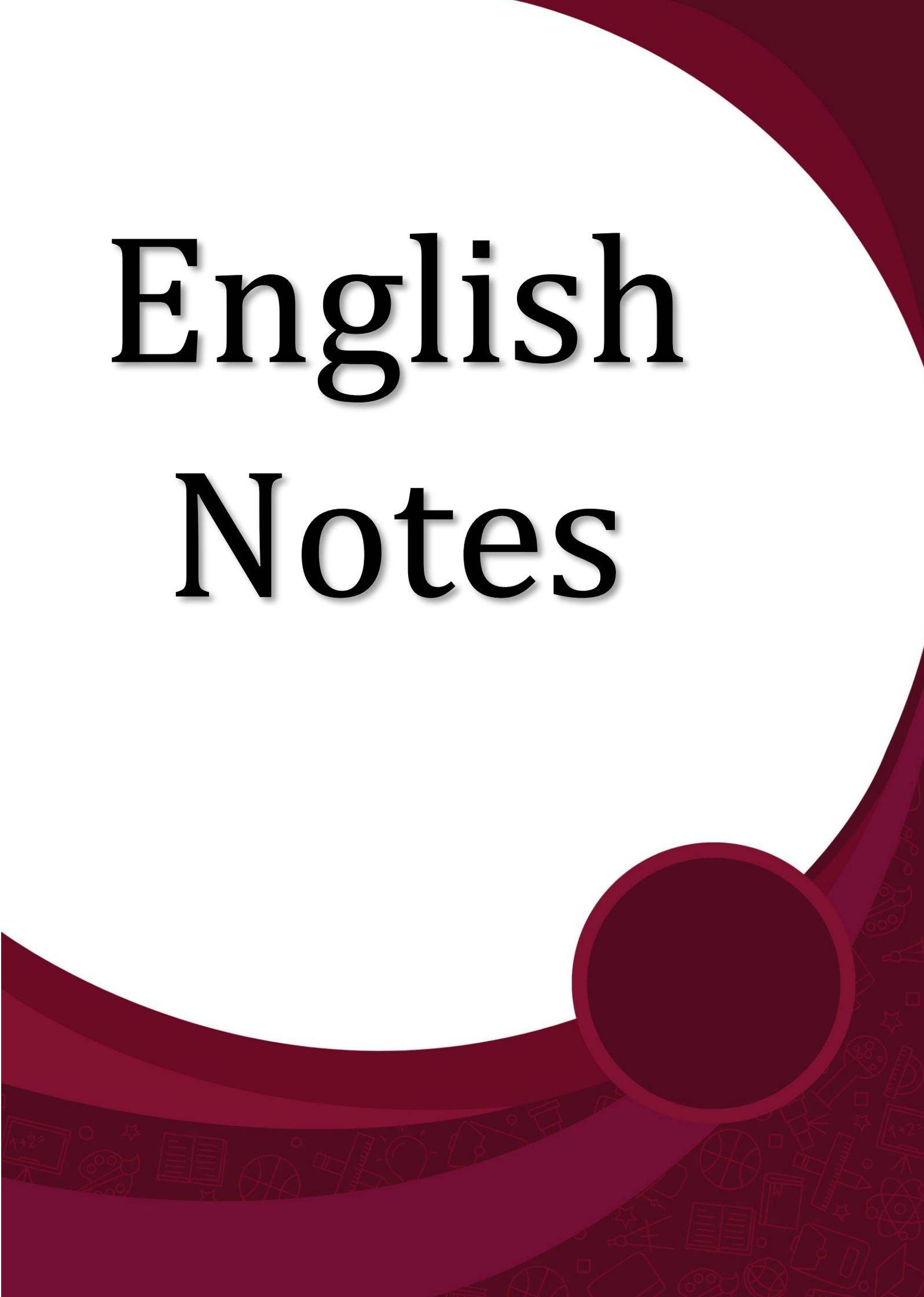


English Notes

The background features a large white circle on the left side, partially enclosed by a maroon arc. The bottom right corner is filled with a maroon color and contains a repeating pattern of small, light-colored educational icons such as a lightbulb, a ruler, a book, a globe, and a graduation cap.

Vistas Chapter-7

Evan Tries an O Level

Author: Colin Dexter

Introduction

The story **Evans Tries an O-Level** is about a clever prisoner named **James Roderick Evans**, who is famous for escaping from prison. He has already escaped three times and is now imprisoned for the fourth time. Evans plans another clever escape by pretending that he wants to appear for the **O-Level German examination**.

The story highlights **Evans's intelligence and clever planning**, as well as the failure of prison authorities to stop him.

Detailed Summary

James Roderick Evans, also known as “Evans the Break,” is a prisoner who has escaped from prison three times before. When he is imprisoned again, he suddenly shows interest in taking the **O-Level German examination**. However, this is actually part of his plan to escape from prison.

The **Governor** of the prison is aware of Evans's reputation and takes strict precautions to prevent another escape. Evans is given **German lessons for six months** by a tutor to prepare for the exam. The tutor doubts Evans will pass, but Evans jokingly says that he might surprise everyone.

On the day of the exam, two prison officers, **Jackson and Stephens**, thoroughly search Evans's cell. They remove all objects that could help him escape or harm himself. They even ask him to remove his hat, but Evans refuses, saying it is his lucky charm. The authorities allow him to keep it.

To ensure security, Evans's cell is **bugged with a microphone** so the Governor can listen to every conversation.

The exam invigilator, **Rev. S. McLeery**, arrives with a brown suitcase and a semi-inflated rubber ring, which he says he needs for medical reasons. After being searched, he enters the cell and the exam begins.

During the exam, Stephens keeps checking the cell through the peephole. Everything appears normal. At one point, Evans asks for a blanket because he feels cold.

When the exam ends at **11:20 a.m.**, Stephens escorts the invigilator to the main gate. Later, when he looks back into the cell, he finds a wounded man dressed like the invigilator. The Governor is informed and the injured man is sent to the hospital.

Meanwhile, Evans has escaped from the prison disguised as **McLeery**.

Later, the police discover the real **Rev. S. McLeery** tied up in his house in **Broad Street**, where he had been kept since early morning. The authorities realize that Evans's friend had disguised himself as the invigilator and helped Evans escape.

Using a clue from the question paper, the Governor finally finds Evans hiding in a hotel and arrests him again. Evans explains how he planned the escape.

However, the story ends with another twist. While Evans is being taken away in a prison van, the officer guarding him turns out to be **one of Evans's friends in disguise**. He unlocks the handcuffs and Evans escapes once again.

Thus, Evans finally **has the last laugh**.

Characters

James Roderick Evans

- A clever and intelligent prisoner
- Known as “Evans the Break”
- Famous for escaping from prison
- Uses intelligence and careful planning to escape again

The Governor

- Head of the prison
- Careful and responsible
- Tries to prevent Evans's escape but is ultimately fooled

Rev. S. McLeery

- The real exam invigilator
- Kidnapped and tied up by Evans's accomplices

Jackson and Stephens

- Prison officers responsible for guarding Evans

Themes

1. Intelligence vs Authority

Evans's clever planning allows him to outsmart the prison authorities.

2. Deception and Trickery

The story revolves around disguises, false identities, and clever tricks.

3. Overconfidence of Authorities

Despite strict security, the prison authorities underestimate Evans.

Title Justification

The title **Evans Tries an O-Level** refers to Evans's attempt to take the O-Level German exam. However, the exam is only a part of his clever plan to escape from prison. The title is slightly ironic because Evans is not really interested in passing the exam; his real goal is to break out of prison again.

Important Exam Questions

1. Why did Evans want to take the O-Level German exam?

Evans pretended to take the exam as part of a clever plan to escape from prison. The examination provided an opportunity to bring an outsider into the prison and create confusion.

2. How did Evans escape from prison during the exam?

Evans's accomplice disguised himself as the invigilator, Rev. McLeery. During the exam, Evans exchanged clothes with him and escaped disguised as the invigilator while the real McLeery remained tied up elsewhere.

3. Why did Evans keep the hat with him?

Evans insisted on keeping his hat because it helped hide his hairstyle and later became part of his disguise during the escape.

4. Why is the ending of the story ironic?

The Governor finally catches Evans and believes that the escape plan has failed. However, the prison officer escorting Evans turns out to be Evans's accomplice, who helps him escape again. Thus, Evans ultimately has the last laugh.

Important 5-Mark Questions

1. How did Evans plan his escape from prison?

Evans carefully planned his escape by pretending to appear for the O-Level German examination. This allowed an outsider, the invigilator, to enter the prison. However, the real invigilator, Rev. McLeery, was kidnapped by Evans's accomplice early in the morning. One of Evans's friends disguised himself as McLeery and came to the prison to conduct the exam.

During the exam, Evans exchanged clothes with the fake invigilator and escaped disguised as him. The accomplice stayed behind pretending to be injured. Later, Evans escaped from the hospital and reached a hotel. Although the Governor managed to capture him later, Evans's friend again helped him escape while being taken away in the prison van.

2. What precautions were taken by the prison authorities to prevent Evans from escaping?

Answer:

The prison authorities took several precautions to prevent Evans from escaping. Evans's cell was thoroughly searched before the exam and all objects that could be used as weapons were removed. The Governor also installed a microphone in the cell to listen to every conversation.

Two officers, Jackson and Stephens, were assigned to guard Evans. Stephens kept checking the cell through the peephole during the exam. The invigilator was also searched before entering the cell. Despite all these precautions, Evans managed to escape due to his clever planning and the help of his accomplices.

3. Why is Evans called "Evans the Break"?

Answer:

Evans is called “Evans the Break” because he is famous for escaping from prison. Before the events of the story, he had already escaped from prison three times. His reputation as a clever escape artist makes the prison authorities very cautious.

Even with strict security arrangements, Evans manages to escape again by using a clever plan during the O-Level German examination. His intelligence and ability to trick the authorities justify the nickname “Evans the Break.”

4. How did the Governor finally trace Evans after his escape?

Answer:

After Evans escaped, the Governor carefully examined the question paper used in the exam. He noticed certain clues in the paper that helped him identify Evans’s possible hiding place. Using these hints, the Governor traced Evans to the Golden Lion Hotel.

The Governor went there and arrested Evans. He also learned about the detailed escape plan. However, his success was short-lived because Evans escaped again with the help of a fake prison officer who was actually his friend.

5. Do you think Evans was a smart criminal or just lucky? Give reasons.

Answer:

Evans was definitely a smart criminal rather than simply lucky. His escape was the result of careful planning and teamwork. He arranged for his accomplice to disguise himself as the invigilator and ensured that the real invigilator was kidnapped.

He also cleverly used the examination as an opportunity to execute his plan. Even after being caught by the Governor, Evans escaped again because one of his friends pretended to be a prison officer. These incidents show that Evans relied more on intelligence and planning than on luck.

6. Describe the role of the Governor in preventing Evans’s escape. Was he successful?

Answer:

The Governor plays an important role in ensuring strict security during Evans’s O-Level German examination. Since Evans had already escaped from prison three times, the Governor takes special precautions to prevent another escape. He orders a thorough search of Evans’s cell and removes all objects that could be used as weapons.

The invigilator, Rev. McLeery, is also searched before entering the cell. A microphone is installed in Evans’s cell so the Governor can listen to every conversation. Prison officers Jackson and Stephens are assigned to guard Evans carefully.

Despite all these precautions, Evans manages to escape by cleverly exchanging clothes with his accomplice disguised as the invigilator. Although the Governor later finds Evans at a hotel and arrests him, Evans escapes again with the help of another accomplice. Therefore, the Governor’s efforts ultimately fail.

7. What role did Evans’s accomplices play in his escape?

Answer:

Evans's escape was successful mainly because of the help of his accomplices. One of his friends kidnapped the real invigilator, Rev. McLeery, early in the morning and tied him up in his house. The accomplice then disguised himself as McLeery and arrived at the prison to conduct the exam.

During the exam, Evans exchanged clothes with the fake invigilator and escaped from the prison disguised as him. The accomplice stayed behind pretending to be injured to mislead the prison authorities.

Later, when Evans was caught by the Governor and taken away in a prison van, another accomplice disguised as a prison officer helped him escape again by unlocking his handcuffs. Thus, Evans's friends played a crucial role in planning and executing the escape.

8. How does the story show Evans's intelligence and presence of mind?

Answer:

The story clearly shows that Evans is a highly intelligent and clever criminal. He carefully plans his escape by pretending to appear for the O-Level German examination. This allows an outsider to enter the prison and provides an opportunity for him to escape.

Evans refuses to remove his hat, which later helps him maintain his disguise. During the exam, he cleverly exchanges clothes with the fake invigilator and escapes from the prison without raising suspicion.

Even after being caught by the Governor, Evans manages to escape again with the help of another accomplice disguised as a prison officer. His clever planning, quick thinking, and ability to deceive the authorities prove his intelligence and presence of mind.