

**Junior Secondary**  
**Oxford English Writing Competition**

# Whodunnit?

Read **Mr Jasper Tsang's** beginning of the detective story below.

It was the last lesson of the day, an English lesson. The teacher, Mrs Wu, had been talking non-stop in front of the class for the last twenty minutes, oblivious to the noise of the many private conversations going on in the classroom.

Tommy looked around at his classmates. Then he looked at his wristwatch. The school bell would ring in fifteen minutes. 'Fifteen more minutes,' he thought, 'and I'll be safe.'

The minutes passed like hours. A big man suddenly appeared at the classroom door, silhouetted against the afternoon sunlight. Tommy could not see the face clearly, but he knew it was Mr Lee, the Deputy School Principal. Tommy's heart missed a beat.

Mrs Wu went over to the door, and Mr Lee said something to her in a subdued voice. Tommy could not hear what was said, but he saw the serious look on Mrs Wu's face.

Mrs Wu stepped aside and Mr Lee walked into the classroom. 'Boys and girls,' he said aloud, 'one of your bags contains something that should not be there. We have to take a quick look in each of your bags.'

'What are you looking for, sir? Has someone reported a theft?' asked a little boy in the front row.

'Can't tell you yet, sonny,' replied Mr Lee. 'Now, boys and girls, put your bags on your desks and open them.'

“Now, boys and girls, put your bags on your desks and open them.” All the students became very nervous.

“Are you alright, Tommy?” asked Sunny softly.

“I am fine,” Tommy responded uneasily.

“But why do you look so scared?” asked a concerned Sunny.

“No, I just feel unwell, maybe I am a bit sick,” mumbled Tommy, who looked distracted.

Mr Lee started to check the school bags. All the students became quiet and nobody talked to one another. Mr. Lee searched everyone’s bags carefully, item by item.

Tommy talked to his neighbour quietly, “What should I do? Should I tell Mr Lee?”

“How can you tell him?” retorted his neighbour. Tommy interrupted him. “I don’t know what to do,” reacted Tommy anxiously.

Suddenly, Mr Lee walked in front of Tommy and asked, “What are you two talking about? You shouldn’t talk to each other at this moment of investigation.” Tommy became even more uneasy. He held his fists tightly.

“Open your bag now,” commanded Mr Lee. Tommy slowly unzipped his schoolbag, hiding from Mr. Lee’s eye contact. While Mr Lee was searching Tommy’s schoolbag, Tommy kept on shaking and looking pressingly at his neighbour.

“What’s this inside your bag?” shouted Mr Lee.

Tommy spoke softly and started sobbing, “That’s a dead rabbit from my home. I intend to take it and bury it in the park.” Mr Lee looked at Tommy with disbelief. Then, Tommy’s neighbour interrupted, “It’s true. His rabbit was found not moving in the house yesterday. After seeing the vet, Tommy was told it was dead.” Mr Lee thought for a while and walked away to continue his search. Tommy and his neighbour looked at each other and sighed.

After Mr Lee checked all the students’ schoolbags, he said, “The reason I suddenly checked your bags is that a rumour is going around about some students bringing drugs to school. That is serious and the school must take action instantly. If any one of you know anything, make sure you report it to us as soon as possible.” Everyone was shocked and remain motionless until Mr Lee left the room. Then they couldn’t stop gossiping about who was so bold but foolish to do such a crazy act.

Once the school bell rang, Tommy and his neighbour left school immediately. They carried along a black plastic bag with their backpacks. When they arrived at the nearby park, far away from school, they smiled wickedly and opened the plastic bag.

“Bro, lucky us! In that split second, if you didn’t cut in and said the rabbit died yesterday, I would have been in great trouble,” Tommy talked merrily. His neighbour replied calmly, “No worries. Even if he noticed the dead rabbit, he wouldn’t have guessed that we put the dope inside. We’re sharp as a tack! Now it’s up to us to enjoy the windfall and the mixed blessings we experienced today! Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Lam Wing Yi, F.3D, St. Mark’s School