

The 'Dirty War'

Level 1 | Elementary

1 Pre-reading: Key Vocabulary

Fill the gaps using one of these key words from the text:

guilty **murder** **torture** **military coup**
guerrilla **investigation** **punish** **acceptable**

1. If you decide to kill someone and then you kill them, this is called _____.
2. If you _____ someone, you make them suffer because they have done something wrong.
3. A _____ person is someone who has done something wrong.
4. In an _____ people try to find the answers to a lot of questions.
5. When the army removes the government, this is called a _____.
6. If something is _____ it is allowed by most people.
7. A _____ is a person who is not in an army but who fights against an army or government.
8. _____ means to cause pain to someone to make them give information.

2 Find the Information

Look in the text and find this information as quickly as possible:

1. In which country was there a "dirty war"?
2. When was the "dirty war"?
3. When was the military coup in Chile?
4. How many people died or "disappeared" in Peru?
5. How many people did the military kill in Chile?
6. How many people did the guerrillas kill in Argentina?

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In the last few weeks some important changes have happened in Latin America. In Argentina the government has introduced some new laws. In the past, people who took part in the "dirty war" against the left in the 1970s and 1980s remained free. Even if they were guilty of murder and torture, nothing happened to them. Now the new law means that these people might go to prison. The people of Argentina will also be able to examine what happened during those dark years. They will see who was responsible for the terrible crimes and they will learn why the authorities did not punish them. The new president of Argentina, Nestor Kirchner, supports these new laws.

In Chile last month President Lagos announced plans to investigate a similar period in Chilean history that followed the 1973 military coup. Chile will not punish some of the people who took part in murder and torture if they give information to the authorities about what happened to the 3,000 people killed by the military.

In Peru last month the authorities published a new report about the 1980s, when 60,000 died or "disappeared." In Peru too an investigation will probably follow and people will have to answer for their crimes.

People have reacted to these changes in different ways. The 1970s and 80s were an extremely painful time in these three countries. Some conservative journalists say it is better to forget the past and to think about the future. Other people

agree with President Bush and say that all 'terrorists' are "evil" and that when you are fighting terrorists, they say, all methods are acceptable and you have to fight fire with fire. These people believe that the military should not answer for their crimes because they were fighting extremists – people the military thought of as 'terrorists'. Many say that the people killed were not terrorists and that all they did was oppose the military governments.

The military killed a lot more people than the extremists did. In Argentina, for example, leftist guerrillas were responsible for about 600 deaths. The Argentinian military was responsible for 15,000 killings and disappearances. In Chile the guerrillas killed 150 people and the military killed 3,000. In Peru the guerrillas killed a lot more, but the military killed about 20,000 people. In all three countries the government allowed murders and torture to happen.

In 1974 there was a large advertisement in the streets of Buenos Aires. It said, "Silence is Health". The advertisement was to stop drivers using their car horns but many people thought it had a different meaning. Now people are finally breaking the silence.

The Guardian Weekly 20-09-03, page 14

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3 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings of the sentences:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. In Argentina, people guilty of torture and murder | a. that all terrorists are evil. |
| 2. In Chile, people guilty of torture and murder | b. will have to answer for their crimes. |
| 3. In Peru, people guilty of torture and murder | c. that you have to fight fire with fire. |
| 4. Some conservative journalists say | d. to stop people using their car horns. |
| 5. President Bush says | e. might go to prison. |
| 6. Some people say | f. killed 15,000 people. |
| 7. In Argentina, the military | g. that it is better to think about the future and forget about the past. |
| 8. The purpose of the advertisement was | h. will not go to prison if they give information to the authorities. |

4 Vocabulary: Word Building

Complete the table. Use your dictionary to help you.

Verb	Noun
1. investigate	_____
2. punish	_____
3. examine	_____
4. react	_____
5. publish	_____
6. agree	_____
7. mean	_____
8. disappear	_____

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5 Vocabulary: Prepositions

Complete the sentences using a preposition:

1. Many people were guilty _____ murder and torture.
2. They were responsible _____ terrible crimes.
3. They took part _____ the war against the left.
4. They will have to answer _____ their crimes.
5. People have reacted _____ the changes in different ways.
6. Some journalists say it is better to think _____ the future.
7. You have to fight fire _____ fire.
8. People are calling _____ justice.

6 Vocabulary: Puzzle

Rearrange the letters to make key words from the text.

1. ugitly _____
2. imarlity _____
3. antsevitgei _____
4. perbionless _____
5. stijuce _____
6. ritahisuetto _____

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Key

1 Key Vocabulary

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. murder | 2. punish |
| 3. guilty | 4. investigation |
| 5. military coup | 6. acceptable |
| 7. guerrilla | 8. torture |

2 Find the Information

1. Argentina
2. 1970s and 1980s
3. 1973
4. 60,000
5. 3,000
6. 600

3 Comprehension Check

1. e; 2. h; 3. b; 4. g; 5. a;
6. c; 7. f; 8. d

4 Vocabulary – Word Building

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. investigation | 2. punishment |
| 3. examination | 4. reaction |
| 5. publication | 6. agreement |
| 7. meaning | 8. disappearance |

5 Vocabulary – Prepositions

- | | | | |
|-------|----------|---------|--------|
| 1. of | 2. for | 3. in | 4. for |
| 5. to | 6. about | 7. with | 8. for |

6 Vocabulary - Puzzle

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. guilty | 2. military |
| 3. investigate | 4. responsible |
| 5. justice | 6. authorities |