

Police accused of Rio massacre

Level 1 | Elementary

1 Key Vocabulary

Fill the gaps using these words:

admire	tough	mask	random
vendetta	weep	victim	shanty town

1. A _____ is an area where poor people live in badly built houses.
2. A _____ is a piece of cloth you wear to cover your face.
3. A _____ is a situation in which one group tries to take revenge against another group and tries to kill or harm its members.
4. If you look _____, you look strong and you do not look afraid.
5. You _____ when you are very sad. It is another word for 'cry'.
6. If you _____ someone, you think they are special and you have respect for them.
7. If something is _____, it has no plan or system.
8. A _____ is a person who suffers in a crime or an accident.

2 Find the information

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

1. How many people did the murderers kill in Nova Iguacu?
2. How many people did the murderers kill in Queimados?
3. How many bodies were outside the bar in Queimados?
4. What is the murder rate in Queimados?
5. What is the murder rate in Rio?
6. How old was Julinho when he died?

Police accused of Rio massacre

Level 1 | Elementary

Police accused of Rio massacre Gareth Chetwynd in Rio de Janeiro

Sixteen-year-old Marcelo Julio Gomes do Nascimento lived in Queimados, a poor suburb of Rio de Janeiro. Julinho, as his friends called him, secretly admired the local police. They had powerful guns and looked tough. One warm evening last week, Julinho saw the reality of this image of the police when he was standing outside a bar talking to some of his friends.

An unmarked car came around the corner. The people in the car were wearing masks. They fired shots at Julinho and his friends. The shots were so accurate that they didn't leave any marks on the walls of the bar. Who were the men in the car? Were they just petty criminals and was this another random shooting? People in Queimados now believe that the murderers were off-duty policemen. They think that the murders were part of a vendetta between the policemen and their boss.

A short distance from the bar Adriana Paz Gomes sits on the steps of her modest home weeping for the loss of her son. "I was watching a soap opera when I heard the shots. I knew immediately what it was," she says. Ms Gomes ran into the street and found four bodies in the road. Then someone pointed to a fifth body, the body of her son. "I have such lovely memories of my son. He seemed to be sleeping and I took him in my arms, but he didn't wake up," she says.

Julinho's murder was the last in a series of shootings that night. In total 30 people died. The shooting began in the town of Nova Iguaçu, where 18 people were killed. Some were in the street when the killers drove past, while nine of the victims, including three teenagers, were in a bar playing video games. The gunmen then

moved on to Queimados where they killed 12 more people.

Local people believed the killers were members of the local military police force and Rio de Janeiro authorities quickly arrested 11 police officers and charged six of them with murder. Off-duty police officers are often members of death squads in the poor suburbs to the northwest of Rio de Janeiro, in a region known as the Baixada Fluminense. Here the murder rate is 76 per 100,000, compared with 50 per 100,000 in metropolitan Rio, which is one of the highest rates in the world.

In some communities people accept these death squads because they kill criminals and stop the drug-trafficking gangs taking power in the shanty towns. But last week's murders were different because most of the victims were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Some people think the killers were protesting against a new commanding officer who wants to stop illegal activities by police officers.

Two days before the shootings, two men, one of them a drug dealer, were taken from a bar and killed. Someone threw a human head into the police-station compound. Then hidden cameras filmed police officers in uniform as they were trying to take some bodies away. Eight police officers are now in prison because of this. The authorities believe that last week's murders were a protest against these arrests.

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has demanded rapid action. "They say they are making arrests, but this is just for show. I know that one day I'll see the man who killed my son driving past me in the street," Ms Gomes said.

The Guardian Weekly 15/04/2005, page 7

Police accused of Rio massacre

Level 1 | Elementary

3 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer:

1. Who killed Julinho?
 - a. drug-traffickers
 - b. uniformed police officers
 - c. off-duty police officers
2. Why did the policemen murder these people?
 - a. they thought they were drug-traffickers
 - b. it was a protest against their new commanding officer
 - c. they thought they were criminals
3. What does Julinho's mother think will happen to the police officers?
 - a. they will go to prison
 - b. nothing will happen to them
 - c. they will lose their jobs
4. Why did Julinho die?
 - a. he was in the wrong place at the wrong time
 - b. his friends were drug-traffickers
 - c. he was a murderer

4 Vocabulary - prepositions

Fill the gaps using prepositions. Check your answers in the text.

1. protest _____ something
2. fire shots _____ someone
3. talk _____ someone
4. move on _____ another place
5. charge someone _____ murder
6. compared _____
7. _____ the wrong place
8. _____ the wrong time

Police accused of Rio massacre

Level 1 | Elementary

5 Collocations

Match the adjectives with the nouns. Check your answers in the text.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. warm | a. criminal |
| 2. powerful | b. shooting |
| 3. random | c. activities |
| 4. short | d. evening |
| 5. petty | e. distance |
| 6. illegal | f. guns |

6 Grammar focus

Look at this example from the text:

Julinho was standing outside a bar.

Make more sentences like this using the prompts

1. he/talk/to his friends
2. the men in the car/wear/masks
3. Julinho's mother/weep
4. the men in the car/carry/guns
5. the teenagers/play/video games
6. some victims/stand/in the street

Police accused of Rio massacre

Level 1 | Elementary

KEY

1 Key Vocabulary

- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. shanty town | 2. mask | 3. vendetta | 4. tough |
| 5. weep | 6. admire | 7. random | 8. victim |

2 Find the information

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 1. 18 | 2. 12 | 3. 5 |
| 4. 76 per 100,000 | 5. 50 per 100,000 | 6. 16 |

3. Comprehension Check

1. c; 2. b; 3. b; 4. a

4. Vocabulary Prepositions

- | | | | |
|------------|---------|-------|-------|
| 1. against | 2. at | 3. to | 4. to |
| 5. with | 6. with | 7. in | 8. at |

5. Collocations

- | | | |
|------|------|------|
| 1. d | 2. f | 3. b |
| 4. e | 5. a | 6. c |

6. Grammar focus Past continuous

1. He was talking to his friends.
2. The men in the car were wearing masks.
3. Julinho's mother was weeping.
4. The men in the car were carrying guns.
5. The teenagers were playing video games.
6. Some victims were standing in the street.