

## Secret agents

**Task 1: Read the text about MI6 and write headings a-f in the correct place.**

- a. How old is MI6?
- b. MI6 agents
- c. MI6 online
- d. Secret messages
- e. What is MI6?
- f. Where is MI6?

You might have heard of MI6 through the man known as 007. James Bond doesn't exist of course, but what about MI6?

1 \_\_\_\_\_

MI6 is very real. It is an organisation that recruits agents who collect 'human intelligence', or information, from countries around the world in order to protect the security of the UK. The official name for MI6 is the Secret Intelligence Service, or SIS.

2 \_\_\_\_\_

MI6 started life as the 'secret service bureau' in a small, rented office in London in 1909. It wasn't officially recognised by the British government until 1995.

3 \_\_\_\_\_

The agency has its present headquarters in a huge building at Vauxhall Cross on the banks of the river Thames. The building can be seen in several James Bond films including 'Skyfall' and 'Spectre'. It is also in the film 'The World Is Not Enough'. In the movie, a bomb, hidden in a suitcase full of money, explodes inside the MI6 headquarters.

4 \_\_\_\_\_

The first chief of MI6 was Sir Mansfield Cumming. He always signed his name as 'C' in green ink. This tradition is continued today, and the chiefs of MI6 typically sign documents with a green 'C'. John le Carré, famous for his spy novels, is a former MI6 agent. He changed his name from David John Moore Cornwell because agents weren't allowed to publish books under their own names.

5 \_\_\_\_\_

During the Second World War (1939-1945), MI6 communicated with agents through coded radio messages broadcast on the BBC. MI6 was also involved in the work of the code breakers who collected important enemy information at Bletchley Park in the south of England. Modern computers didn't exist at that time and the code breakers had to use huge noisy machines to help them break the codes.

6 \_\_\_\_\_

MI6 now has an official website where anyone can learn about its history, follow an example investigation, learn about the different careers with the organisation, and even apply for a job.

**Task 2: Sentences 1-5 contain false information. Correct the information with a partner then read the text again to check your answers.**

1. The Secret Intelligence Section is MI6's real name.
2. The British government officially recognised MI6 100 years ago.
3. The first chief of MI6 signed documents with his name in green ink.
4. MI6 sent coded messages to the enemy during the Second World War.
5. Only agents can access the MI6 website.

**Task 3: Discuss these questions.**

- Is James Bond a realistic spy? Why? Why not?
- Do you know any famous spy stories from your country?
- What are the pros and cons of being a spy?
- Would you spy for your country? Why? Why not?

**Task 4: Can you decode these secret messages?**

1. WHE CIRST OETTER PF KACH EORD JS ZRONG

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2. THS MSSG LKS VRY STRNG

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3. TLUCIFFID SI SDRAWKCAB GNITIRW

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4. 23,8,1,20 9,19 25,15,21,18 14,1,13,5?

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With a partner, write another secret coded message here:

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