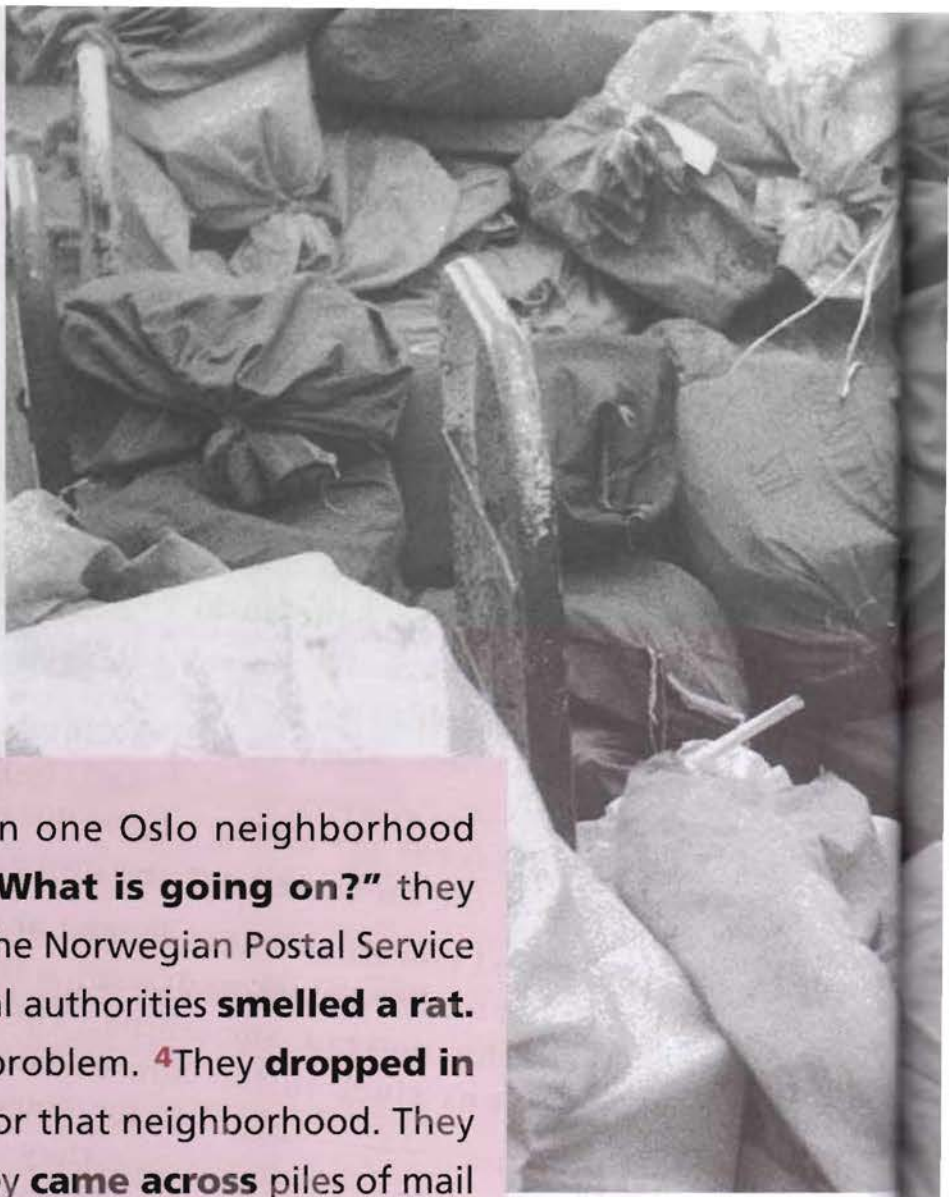


13

Lazy Mailman Hides Letters



1. Quick Reading

Look at the pictures on page 59.

What is the story about?

Now read quickly to get the main idea.

OSLO, NORWAY ¹Residents in one Oslo neighborhood were not getting any mail. **“What is going on?”** they asked each other. ²They told the Norwegian Postal Service about the problem. ³The postal authorities **smelled a rat**. They began to **look into** the problem. ⁴They **dropped in** at the home of the mailman for that neighborhood. They couldn't believe their eyes. They **came across** piles of mail in the man's house. There were **at least** 900 pounds of letters and packages. ⁵It seems the mailman was too lazy to finish his route every day. ⁶Most bosses are happy when an employee takes work home, but not the Norwegian Postal Service. They fired the mailman **at once**.

New idioms and expressions

What is going on?	What is happening?
smell a rat	think there may be something wrong or illegal
look into something*	investigate; examine something
drop in (at a place)*	visit for a short time, often unexpectedly
come across something*	find something by chance
at least	a minimum of; no fewer than
at once	immediately

recycled idiom: not believe one's eyes

*phrasal verb (see Lexicon and Appendix D)

2. Listen

Cover the story and look only at these pictures. Listen to the story two or three times.



3. Read the Story

Now read the story carefully. Pay special attention to the idioms so that you're ready for Exercise 4.

4. Complete the Idiom

Cover page 58. Look at each definition below and then complete the idiom.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| a. What is happening? | = What is going ___? |
| b. investigate | = look _____ |
| c. find by chance | = come _____ |
| d. immediately | = at _____ |
| e. a minimum of | = at _____ |

5. Tell the Story

Cover the story and look at the pictures above. Tell the story using as many idioms as you can.

- First, work with the whole class to retell the story.
- Then tell the story to a partner or small group.

6. Answer the Questions

About the story

- What did residents in Oslo ask each other?
- When postal authorities smelled a rat, what did they do?
- How did they react when they went to the mailman's home?
- What did they come across?
- How many pounds of mail were there?
- Why didn't the mailman deliver the mail?
- What did the Norwegian Postal Service do?

About you

- Are you sometimes too lazy to finish things?
- Tell about a situation when you smelled a rat.
- Have you ever come across something valuable on the street?
- What is going on this week at your school or at your job?

7. Write About Yourself

Complete the sentences, writing something true about yourself.

- I need to _____
at once.
- I often drop in to see _____.
- I have at least _____ pairs of shoes.

8. Take a Dictation

Some residents in Oslo, Norway, were not getting any mail.

“ _____?” they asked each other. The Norwegian Postal Service _____ and _____ the problem. They _____ at the home of the mailman for that neighborhood. They couldn't believe their eyes. They _____ piles of mail in the man's house— _____ 900 pounds! They fired him _____.

9. Complete the Dialogue

a. Paco and Gianni are friends. They're talking about Paco's car. Fill in the blanks with idioms from the box.

- at once
- smell a rat
- looking into
- what's going on
- at least



Hey, Gianni. (1) _____?
Where's my car? You said you
were returning it today.



Uh, do you really need it today?



Yes, I do.



Well...



I need it now. (2) _____.



Um, Paco, the car... uh... You don't want to see it.



I (3) _____. Where is my car?



Well, uh, I parked it over there,
across the street.



Where? Oh! I don't believe my eyes! The front is smashed in.
Oh, no! Oh, man, you had an accident! It looks bad! That'll cost
me (4) _____ \$1,000 bucks!*



Paco, calm down. Someone hit it in a parking lot.
I reported it to the police and they're
(5) _____ it. I'm really sorry, man.



Not half as sorry as I am.

* bucks: dollars (informal)
recycled idioms: I don't believe my eyes, calm down

b. Work with a partner. Role-play the dialogue together.