

HOSTAGE

Ali has taken Flight 144 many times. It was always long and boring. But this time, something has happened. Read his story and find out: What has happened on the flight?



I check my watch just after take-off and see that the flight is about 10 minutes behind schedule. That's nothing new, but the pilot always manages to land on time, in about five hours. So I close my eyes to rest a bit before the meal service.

Suddenly, loud shouts from the front of the plane startle me out of my nap. I hear more shouts, angry and threatening, and then a scream. I start to go forward to see what's wrong when a masked man waving a gun runs down the aisle, screaming at everyone to stay seated.

A hijack! The plane has been taken over by terrorists!

The terrorists are telling everyone to stay calm. They say that nothing will happen to us if the pilot flies the plane to another country. They say that they do not want to kill innocent people.

After three long, terrible hours, the plane lands in the country where the terrorists want to go. But then nothing happens. We sit in the hot plane for hours, waiting to be released.

The pilot announces that the terrorists have two demands. **First, the government must free some prisoners. Second, they want another plane so they can fly to a secret location.** At first, I am happy, thinking that we will all be free shortly. But the pilot says the government will not do that. **The terrorists have made a mistake and have landed in a country whose government refuses to talk to terrorists.** Its president says it will never yield to criminals and terrorists.

Our chances do not look good. There is no way that we can overpower the terrorists. They are heavily armed and watch us carefully. It is impossible to escape from the plane.

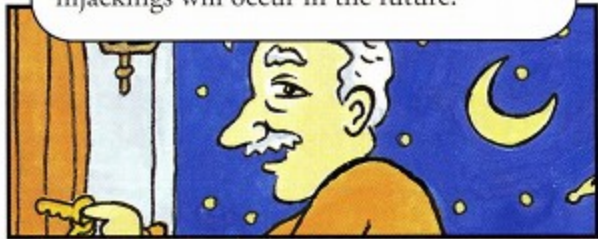
So here we sit, hostages in a life-or-death situation. The terrorists don't care about our lives. They are threatening to kill us, one by one. But the government says it will never talk to terrorists. They don't seem to care about our lives, either.

Will I get out of this situation alive?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think is the best thing to do?
Check the views you agree with.

- The government should never give in. If they give in to the terrorists, more hijackings will occur in the future.



- The plane should be allowed to fly to some other country whose government will talk to the terrorists.



- The government should talk to the terrorists. The passengers' lives are the most important thing.



- Another organization, like the United Nations, should talk to the terrorists.



- The police or army should secretly attack the plane and kill the terrorists.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

TURN TO PAGE 87 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.

LOOKING AT THE ISSUE

In our society there are many kinds of threats. What should we do? For each case, decide what to do.

1. You are the president of a large company. A man phones you and threatens you. He says if you don't pay him \$100,000 he will bomb the company building. What would you do?

pay him tell the police ignore him other:

2. You are in an elevator with a big man. He tells you to give him your money. He doesn't seem to have a gun or knife. What would you do?

give him your money try to get out of the elevator ignore him other:

3. You are the prime minister of your country. One of your ministers was kidnapped by terrorists. They say the government must free 10 people from prison or they will kill the minister. What would you do?

free the prisoners try to talk to the terrorists

ignore them other:

Do you know any other situations like these?