

Read the mystery below to find evidence to identify the innocent and guilty suspects. Remember, the story and suspects' statements are true.

## The Cunning Customer

<sup>1</sup>On December 1 of this year, Jennison City Police investigated the theft of a bracelet from Jennison's Fine Jewelry. <sup>2</sup>The bracelet disappeared between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. from a display on the jewelry counter. <sup>3</sup>Police interviewed four witnesses. <sup>4</sup>The first witness said the thief was not a devout customer of the store. <sup>5</sup>The second witness said the theft transpired while the sales associate heeded a persnickety customer's tirade. <sup>6</sup>A third witness said the sales associate abetted the thief before she attended to the exacting customer.

<sup>7</sup>Police took the statements from the four suspects listed below. <sup>8</sup>After weighing the evidence, police arrested one of the suspects, who later confessed, and police retrieved the bracelet from her possession later that day.



**Margaret Mathers**

<sup>9</sup>"I was interested in some jewelry but deferred my own questions to the staff until the fastidious customer finished her rant. <sup>10</sup>I saw Helen Speath enter the store amid the harangue."



**Helen Speath**

<sup>11</sup>"The store is not a haunt of mine. <sup>12</sup>I was looking for a gift and came to the store based on the recommendation of a co-worker. <sup>13</sup>I have no convictions about the harried sales associate who left my queries unresolved."



**Anna Knox**

<sup>14</sup>"I am a stalwart fixture in the store and recommended it to my friend, Margaret Mathers. <sup>15</sup>Since then, she has become an inveterate patron."



**Angela Payne**

<sup>16</sup>"I sporadically shop in the store. <sup>17</sup>I found the sales associate to be obliging even though the store was bustling. <sup>18</sup>I can attest to the moiling attention the finicky customer necessitated."

**Based on the evidence, circle the suspect who is the Cunning Customer.**

After solving the case, write the best vocabulary word to complete each sentence. Each word can only be used once.

abet	harangue	persnickety	devout	exacting
fastidious	query	bustling	inveterate	necessitate
obliging	attest	heed	stalwart	transpire
amid	harried	sporadically		

1. During the summer, the beach is \_\_\_\_\_ with tourists.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ host provided us with excellent accommodations.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ fan never misses a basketball game.
4. The collector saw the treasures \_\_\_\_\_ the junk.
5. The impressive trophy \_\_\_\_\_ a custom-built case.
6. Please direct all \_\_\_\_\_ to the information desk.
7. The guide advised the tourists to \_\_\_\_\_ all posted signs.
8. The architect prepared multiple designs for the \_\_\_\_\_ client.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ habits can be difficult to break.
10. Pop-up rain showers happen \_\_\_\_\_ without warning.
11. The loud \_\_\_\_\_ drew stares from bystanders.
12. The clueless substitute unknowingly \_\_\_\_\_ the class troublemaker.
13. After a barrage of questions, the speaker became \_\_\_\_\_.
14. I can \_\_\_\_\_ to the applicant's strong work ethic.
15. The event \_\_\_\_\_ while I was absent.

# Answers

## The Cunning Customer (pages 24-25)



Margaret Mathers



Helen Speath



Anna Knox



Angela Payne

### The Innocent

**Margaret Mathers:** In sentence 6, we learn that the third witness saw the thief being assisted by the sales associate before attending to the exacting customer. This is the same customer that is described in sentence 5 as persnickety and launched a tirade just before the theft. In sentence 9, we learn that Mathers deferred to ask a question until the fastidious customer finished her rant. In sentence 4, the first witness states that the thief was not a devout shopper at the store. In sentence 15, Knox calls Mathers an inveterate (habitual) patron. This proves Margaret Mathers' innocence.

**Helen Speath:** In sentence 10, Mathers states that Speath arrived in the store amid the customer's harangue. In sentence 6, we learn that the third witness saw the thief assisted by the sales associate before attending to the exacting customer. This is the same customer that is described in sentence 5 as persnickety and launched a tirade just before the theft. This proves Speath's innocence since she arrived in the store during the tirade.

**Anna Knox:** In sentence 4, the first witness states that the thief was not a devout shopper at the store. In sentence 14, Knox states that she is a stalwart fixture in the store. This proves Anna Knox's innocence.

### The Cunning Customer

**Angela Payne** is the Cunning Customer because a process of elimination exonerates the other suspects. Sentence 8 tells us that the police arrested one of the four suspects and one confessed. In sentence 4, the first witness states that the thief was not a devout shopper at the store. In sentences 16 and 17, Payne states she is a sporadic shopper in the store and that an obliging sales associate waited on her. In addition, in sentence 18 she attested to the moiling attention the finicky customer necessitated.

1. bustling
2. obliging
3. devout or stalwart
4. amid
5. necessitated
6. queries
7. heed
8. exacting, fastidious, or persnickety
9. inveterate
10. sporadically
11. harangue
12. abetted
13. harried
14. attest
15. transpired

### Vocabulary Words and Appropriate Synonym for Context Within Case

Vocabulary Word	Synonym
abet	help
amid	among
attest	vouch
bustling	busy
devout	faithful
exacting	particular
fastidious	choosy
finicky	picky
harangue	rant
harried	strained
heed	regard
inveterate	deep-rooted
moiling	difficult
necessitate	need
obliging	accommodating
persnickety	fussy
query	question
sporadically	occasionally
stalwart	reliable
transpire	occur