

ALDRICH AMES Traitor

It came to a sudden end on February 21, 1994. Aldrich Ames left his home that morning, telling his wife he would be back shortly. He climbed into his wine-red XJ6 Jaguar and headed for CIA headquarters. But he didn't get very far. At a stop sign a few blocks from his house, Ames ran into an FBI roadblock. Several cars with red lights flashing surrounded him. America's most destructive traitor was under arrest.

² The arrest of Aldrich Ames had been a long time coming. For 10 years he had betrayed his own country—the United States. Ames worked for the federal government's Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA spies on the country's enemies. At the same time, it tries to prevent these enemies from spying on us. People who work for the CIA often have access to America's most closely held secrets.

³ Ames sold out the United States to the former Soviet Union. He did it for the money—lots of money. Starting in 1985, the Soviets paid Ames \$4.6 million for his treason. In return, Ames gave them what they wanted. He told them about America's top secret plans. No American had ever given an enemy so much. Ames also betrayed his fellow CIA workers. The CIA had recruited some Soviets to work as spies for the United States. Ames gave their names to the Soviets, who moved quickly to arrest them. At least 10 of them were then tried, found guilty, and executed. About two dozen more were thrown into Soviet prisons.

⁴ Ironically, Aldrich Ames himself had never been a good spy. He had done spy work for a while but, although he was bright, his bosses gave him a series of dismal reports. He didn't win any points, for example, when he once left a safe open. The safe held many secrets as well as the combinations to other safes. Ames was also a heavy drinker. Once, while on duty in Italy, the police found him passed out drunk in a street gutter. Surprisingly, he was not fired. Instead, the CIA moved him to a desk job. He was put in charge of Soviet counterintelligence. Imagine, Ames was given the job of trying to stop the Soviets from spying on us!

⁵ Everyone now agrees that Ames should have been caught sooner. CIA officials knew he had problems. But for years they just looked the other way. They couldn't believe that one of their own would turn on them. But Ames did. His treason began on June 13, 1985. On that day, he took several plastic bags crammed with secrets and gave them to a Soviet agent named Chuvakhin. Never in U.S. history have so many classified files been given away in one day. And Ames didn't stop there. Over the next 12 months, he met with the Soviet agent at least 14 more times to leak secrets.

⁶ During that time, CIA agents working in the Soviet Union began to vanish. More and more were picked up, arrested, and shot. Ames had secretly given their names to the Soviets but at the time no one knew that. Americans couldn't figure out how the Soviets were uncovering the spies. Had the spies all made some mistake and gotten caught? Had the Soviets somehow tapped CIA phones? Had the Soviets broken a CIA code? Or did the enemy have a "mole"—a spy—inside the CIA? No one knew. But clearly something was

wrong. The odds were against the CIA losing that many spies that fast without something being rotten.

⁷ Meanwhile, Aldrich Ames seemed to have plenty of money. His salary when he started working for the CIA was only about \$50,000. Yet he was now driving an expensive Jaguar. He purchased an opulent house for \$540,000 and paid for it with cash. (Most people, of course, need to get a loan from a bank to buy a house.) Ames bought rare paintings and pricey jewelry. He even opened up a Swiss bank account. In the past, he had worn rather shabby clothes but now he sported the latest fashions. Still, no one at the CIA seemed to notice or care.

⁸ Ames, who was divorced, remarried in 1985. His new wife was from Colombia. Her name was Maria del Rosario Casa. When Rosario found out what Ames was doing, she joined him. The two became partners in crime. She turned out to be just as greedy as he was. In fact, she might have been the stronger of the two. A former friend later said, "Rosario was the dominant figure. She led the way and [Ames] went along."

⁹ The CIA did not want to face the possibility that they might have a mole. However, none of their other ideas checked out. So, eventually, CIA officials had to look inside their own organization. Who could be selling secrets to the enemy? They started with a long list of suspects. They looked at anyone who had access to top secrets. It took time, but slowly they crossed off most of the names. The name of Aldrich Ames remained on the ever-dwindling list of suspects.

¹⁰ By 1990, CIA agents began to wonder how Ames could live so well on his pay. When they checked his bank records, one agent noticed that Ames had made a series of large deposits in 1985 and 1986. Soon, Ames was a prime suspect. In 1991, the FBI joined in the hunt. This was the first time the CIA and the FBI formed a joint mole-hunt team. Team agents questioned Ames. His answers were vague and evasive. To nail him, the team needed proof that would hold up in court.

¹¹ Secretly, FBI agents staked out the Ames house. Disguised as lawn workers and tree trimmers, they watched and waited. They bugged Ames's house and his car. They tapped his phones. They put a video camera in a tree across the street. The agents even combed through the trash. But week after week, nothing happened. They were sure they had the right man, but they couldn't prove it.

¹² Then one evening, their efforts paid off. Under the cover of darkness, the agents rolled slowly down the street in a van with its headlights off. They snatched a full trash can from Ames's yard and replaced it with an identical, but empty, trash can. Returning to the van, the agents rifled through the garbage. They discovered a torn note arranging a secret meeting with a Soviet agent. Finally the agents were certain they had the right man. Ames was the mole.

¹³ The agents secured a search warrant, and waited until Ames and Rosario went out of town for a trip. The agents then entered the Ames house and began to look around. One agent downloaded all the files Ames had in his computer. Amazingly, Ames had kept a complete record of his treachery on his home computer. It was all there—the drop sites, the signals, the messages.

¹⁴ Still, the FBI wanted to catch Ames in the act, so they waited. Meanwhile, Aldrich Ames continued to work for the CIA. Every day, he pulled into the parking lot in his fancy Jaguar. He went on regularly scheduled business trips. He even went to Moscow on CIA business, coming back \$125,000 richer.

¹⁵ At last, the agents were tired of waiting. They didn't want to risk losing their man. After all, he might go to Moscow and never return. The order was given: "Bring him in." At the same time that Ames ran into the roadblock, other agents moved in on Rosario. Both were put on trial and found guilty. Rosario was sentenced to five years in prison. On April 28, 1994, Aldrich Ames was sentenced to life in prison with no hope for parole. He had done enough damage for one lifetime.

If you have been timed while reading this article, enter your reading time below. Then turn to the Words-per-Minute Table on and look up your reading speed (words per minute). Enter your reading speed on the graph on.

Reading Time: Lesson

_____ : _____

Minutes

Seconds

A Finding the Main Idea

One statement below expresses the main idea of the article. One statement is too general, or too broad. The other statement explains only part of the article; it is too narrow. Label the statements using the following key:

M—Main Idea

B—Too Broad

N—Too Narrow

- _____ 1. For 10 years, Aldrich Ames leaked CIA information to America's enemies, but he was eventually captured and imprisoned for his treason.
- _____ 2. With the money he made from selling U.S. government secrets to the Soviet Union, Aldrich Ames was able to go on a 10-year shopping spree.
- _____ 3. Certainly Aldrich Ames is one of the most infamous traitors in the history of the United States.

_____ Score 15 points for a correct M answer.

_____ Score 5 points for each correct B or N answer.

_____ **Total Score: Finding the Main Idea**

B Recalling Facts

How well do you remember the facts in the article? Put an X in the box next to the answer that correctly completes each statement about the article.

1. For Ames's secrets, the Soviet Union paid about
 - ☐ a. \$1.5 million.
 - ☐ b. \$4.6 million.
 - ☐ c. \$124 million.
2. CIA stands for
 - ☐ a. Central Intelligence of America.
 - ☐ b. Central Information Agency.
 - ☐ c. Central Intelligence Agency.
3. Ames became a prime suspect when CIA agents noticed that
 - ☐ a. he was always late to work.
 - ☐ b. unfamiliar people were coming to his house regularly and leaving with briefcases filled with papers.
 - ☐ c. he was able to buy extremely expensive things that he couldn't afford on his pay.
4. Agents knew they had the right man when they looked through Ames's garbage and found
 - ☐ a. a receipt for a deposit in a Swiss bank account.
 - ☐ b. a note about a meeting with a Soviet agent.
 - ☐ c. a note explaining how to crack a secret CIA code.
5. The scene of Ames's capture was
 - ☐ a. his office at the CIA.
 - ☐ b. the airport just before Ames was about to leave for Moscow.
 - ☐ c. a roadblock set up near Ames's house.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

_____ **Total Score:** Recalling Facts

C Making Inferences

When you combine your own experience and information from a text to draw a conclusion that is not directly stated in that text, you are making an inference. Below are

five statements that may or may not be inferences based on information in the article. Label the statements using the following key:

C—Correct Inference F—Faulty Inference

- _____ 1. Only CIA employees with perfect records could be put in charge of important projects.
- _____ 2. When CIA employees left work for the day, no one searched what they were taking out.
- _____ 3. When they fear that a mole is at work, CIA agents quickly arrest any possible suspects.
- _____ 4. American citizens' bank records are available to the CIA.
- _____ 5. The FBI is so important that its agents don't need a search warrant to search a private citizen's home.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

_____ **Total Score: Making Inferences**

D Using Words Precisely

Each numbered sentence below contains an underlined word or phrase from the article. Following the sentence are three definitions. One definition is closest to the meaning of the underlined word. One definition is opposite or nearly opposite. Label those two definitions using the following key. Do not label the remaining definition.

C—Closest O—Opposite or Nearly Opposite

- 1. He had done spy work for a while but, although he was bright, his bosses gave him a series of dismal reports.
 - _____ a. dreadful
 - _____ b. interesting
 - _____ c. glowing
- 2. Never in U.S. history have so many classified files been given away in one day.
 - _____ a. available to everyone
 - _____ b. restricted to a few people
 - _____ c. personal
- 3. He purchased an opulent house for \$540,000 and paid for it with cash.
 - _____ a. brick
 - _____ b. showy
 - _____ c. simple

4. His answers were vague and evasive.

- _____ a. exact
_____ b. historic
_____ c. unclear

5. His answers were vague and evasive.

- _____ a. expensive
_____ b. intended to cover up or conceal
_____ c. direct and to-the-point

_____ Score 3 points for each correct C answer.

_____ Score 2 points for each correct O answer.

_____ **Total Score: Using Words Precisely**

Enter the four total scores in the spaces below, and add them together to find your Reading Comprehension Score. Then record your score on the graph on.

Score Question Type

_____ Finding the Main Idea

_____ Recalling Facts

_____ Making Inferences

_____ Using Words Precisely

_____ **Reading Comprehension Score**

Author's Approach

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer.

1. What does the author mean by the statement in the first paragraph "It came to a sudden end on February 21, 1994"?

- ☐ a. On that date, the CIA discovered that Aldrich Ames was a spy.
☐ b. FBI and CIA interest in Aldrich Ames ended on that date.
☐ c. On that date, Aldrich Ames's career as a spy ended.

2. From the statement from the article "He purchased an opulent house and paid for it with cash," you can conclude that the author wants the reader to think that

- ☐ a. Ames boldly showed off his wealth, unworried about being caught.

- ☐ b. Ames was an excellent saver who could afford an expensive home on a small salary.
- ☐ c. Although Ames was selling CIA secrets, he was also a good, tax-paying homeowner.
3. How is the author's purpose for writing the article expressed in paragraph 3?
- ☐ a. The author explains that some Soviets were working as spies for America.
- ☐ b. The author explains that Ames turned traitor in order to get rich.
- ☐ c. The author describes the fate of spies that Aldrich identified.
4. The author probably wrote this article in order to
- ☐ a. entertain the reader with a humorous story.
- ☐ b. encourage the reader to stay informed about current events.
- ☐ c. reveal the details about an important event.

_____ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on.

Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Follow the directions provided for question 1. Put an X in the box next to the correct answer for the other questions.

1. Look for the important ideas and events in paragraphs 7 and 8. Summarize those paragraphs in one or two sentences.

2. Read the statement about the article below. Then read the paraphrase of that statement. Choose the reason that best tells why the paraphrase does not say the same thing as the statement.

Statement: This was the first time the CIA and the FBI had worked as a team to find a spy.

Paraphrase: Until this case, the CIA and the FBI refused to cooperate with each other on any spy hunt.

- ☐ a. Paraphrase says too much.
- ☐ b. Paraphrase doesn't say enough.
- ☐ c. Paraphrase doesn't agree with the statement about the article.

3. Choose the sentence that correctly restates the following sentence from the article:

“To nail him, the team needed proof that would hold up in court.”

- ☐ a. To be sure that Ames would be convicted, the team needed proof that the court would accept.
- ☐ b. To arrest Ames, the team needed new proof against him.
- ☐ c. To be sure that Ames was really the mole, the team needed some proof.

____ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on.

Critical Thinking

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer for questions 1, 3, 4, and 5. Follow the directions provided for the other question.

1. Considering what the article told about Aldrich Ames's spy activities, you can predict that
 - ☐ a. the CIA now has more trust in its employees than it did before the Ames incident.
 - ☐ b. the CIA has worked to make it harder for employees to communicate secrets to other countries.
 - ☐ c. Ames will most likely be released from prison soon.
2. Choose from the letters below to correctly complete the following statement. Write the letters on the lines.
On the positive side, _____, but on the negative side _____.
 - a. Rosaria found out about Ames's illegal activities
 - b. the CIA and FBI investigation took years, during which Ames was communicating government secrets
 - c. Ames was finally captured
3. What was the effect of Ames's treachery?
 - ☐ a. Spies for the United States were executed by the Soviets.
 - ☐ b. The Soviets learned for the first time that the United States didn't trust them.
 - ☐ c. Soviet spies were able to live freely in the United States.
4. How is the CIA related to the FBI?
 - ☐ a. The CIA always works together with the FBI in solving crimes.
 - ☐ b. They are both government organizations that investigate mysteries.
 - ☐ c. Agents for both organizations act very quickly to stop crime.

5. Which paragraphs from the article provide evidence that supports your answer to question 3?

_____ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on.

Personal Response

How do you think Rosario felt when she found out that her husband was working as a spy against the United States?

Self-Assessment

A word or phrase in the article that I do not understand is
