

A noble gangster

- 1- Noble (adj.) = aristocratic = of a high social rank
- 2- Gangster (n.) = mobster = a member of a gang of criminals
- 3- Shop (n.) Br. = store Am.
- 4- Business (n.) = company = firm
- 5- Sum (n.) = amount of money
- 6- Promptly (adv.) = immediately = without delay
- 7- Remarkable (adj.) = unusual = surprising
- 8- Would rather = would sooner = would prefer to
- 9- Arrive in (v.) = reach
- 10- Band (n.) = group
- 11- Settle (v.) = start living permanently
- 12- Soon (adv.) = shortly = in a short time
- 13- Name (n.) = reputation
- 14- Willing (adj.) = ready = prepared
- 15- Demand (v.) = ask
- 16- Sort (n.) = kind
- 17- State (adj.) = official
- 18- Valiant (adj.) = brave and determined
- 19- Notable (adj.) = important = noteworthy

After we have read the passage and explained the meanings of some of the words in it, it is time to answer the comprehension questions. These are done below:

- 1- Sir John Hawkwood settled near Florence six hundred years ago.
- 2- He hired soldiers to princes of Italian city-states in times of war.
- 3- He would threaten to destroy a city-state in times of peace.
- 4- He would spare a city-state if protection money was paid.
- 5- The Italians regarded him as a hero in spite of this.

- 6- He was eighty when he died.
- 7- The Florentines gave him a state funeral when he died.
- 8- They had a picture painted.
- 9- It was dedicated to his memory.

Now our task is to link the sentences above so as to create a précis. Here is an attempt below:

Six hundred years ago, Sir John Hawkwood settled near Florence, hiring soldiers to princes of Italian city-states in times of war. In times of peace, however, he would threaten to destroy a city-state unless protection money was paid. In spite of this, the Italians regarded him as a hero. Thus when he died at the age of eighty, the Florentines gave him a state funeral and had a picture painted and dedicated to his memory.