WHY EYEWITNESSES GET IT WRONG
BY SCOTT FRASER

WARM-UP

1. Discuss the questions below:
- How could eye-witnesses be influenced by external factors?
- How significant is eye-witness testimony in the legal system of your country?
- If you were a lawyer, would you defend someone who you know is guilty?
- What if you were innocent of a crime but were convicted based on the testimony of 6 witnesses?

VOCABULARY

1. Choose a word that doesn't fit to the others in the same row:

a) CULPRIT	OAF	PERPETRATOR	OFFENDER
b) WAVERINGLY	ADAMANTLY	FIRMLY	DECISIVELY
c) ACQUIT	PARDON	INCARCERATE	EXONERATE
d) DETEST	DESPISE	ABHOR	RELISH
e) FEARLESS	AUDACIOUS	BOLD	IMPERTINENT
f) VIVID	SHARP	LIVELY	FRESH
g) ADAPTABLE	MALLEABLE	ELASTIC	BRITTLE

2. Decide which groups of words [a) - g)] fit into the gaps below and then select the most suitable word from each group (you may need to change its form):

- How do you think the fact that our brains are so _____ influences our memories?
- What type of offences do you _____ the most?
- Would you be able to describe a _____ if you saw him/her only once?
- Have you heard of any cases of people being _____ after being wrongfully convicted?
- What's your earliest memory that is _____ enough that you can recall it?

3. Discuss in pairs the questions from exercise 2

4. Transform the words in capital letters so that they fit into the gaps:

a) Although it's a form of cyberbullying, digital _____ usually **HARASS**
   takes place between two people in a romantic relationship.

b) Serious _____ of international humanitarian law are **VIOLATE**
   called war crimes.

c) Since 1998 the maximum penalty has been life _____ **PRISON**
   .

d) The bank was able to detect the _____ withdrawal of **FRAUD**
   funds in real time and alert the police in a matter of a few minutes.

e) They have restraining orders placed upon them based upon false **ACCUSE**
   _____ .

f) Historically, _____ was defined as lying while testifying in **PERJURE**
   court.

DISCUSSION:

1. Consider these questions in small groups:

- Why was it such an important turning point when the judge went to the crime scene? Should this be a standard practice for important trials?

- What does Scott Fraser mean when he states that "all our memories are reconstructed memories"?

- How can we make sure that people are not unfairly prosecuted because of biased or unreliable evidence? Should we make juries aware of the relative accuracy of each piece of evidence?

- How science can help the law enforcement agencies?

- What might be the common causes of wrongful convictions?