

Unit 4 The best things in life are free

The fake heiress



Anna Sorokin was born in Russia but moved to Germany with her family as a teenager. She pretended to be Anna Delvey, a German heiress, to trick New York hotels, fashionable friends and banks into thinking she was a billionaire. She hired a private jet, went to all the best parties, and threw cash at everyone she saw.

Sorokin presented fake documents to get a loan of \$22m from a bank to help set up a private arts club in Manhattan, the Anna Delvey Foundation. She claimed she had €60 million in a Swedish bank. When bank representatives went to Sweden to check, Sorokin got scared and withdrew her loan application. She managed to get a \$100,000 loan, which prosecutors said she never repaid. Sorokin used about \$30,000 of that to cover her overdue bills at the fashionable 11 Howard hotel, where she was living.

Prosecutors said Sorokin also deposited bad checks amounting to \$15,000 in an account with Signature Bank, managing to withdraw \$8,200 in cash before the checks bounced, and used fake wire transfer receipts to trick victims.

On May 9, 2019, Judge Diane Kiesel sentenced Delvey to 4 to 12 years in prison and ordered her to pay about \$199,000 in restitution and a \$24,000 fine. Delvey was released from prison on February 11, 2021 on good behaviour.

She became so well-known that Netflix made a TV series about her life and crimes in New York called *Inventing Anna*.

Adapted from: <https://www.euronews.com/2019/05/10/fake-heiress-who-dazzled-new-york-elite-sentenced-to-four-to-12-years-for-fraud>

Exercise 1: Choose the best answer from (a), (b) or (c).

1. Sorokin represented herself as _____.
 - a) a German heiress
 - b) a rich artist
 - c) a Russian billionaire

2. She tried to get a loan to start _____.
 - a) a luxury hotel
 - b) a nightclub in Manhattan
 - c) an arts centre

3. She withdrew her loan application because _____.
 - a) the bank checked her assets in Sweden
 - b) her credit cards came back declined
 - c) they found out she was a fake

4. She was released from prison earlier because _____.
 - a) she was sent back to Germany
 - b) she paid back her debts
 - c) she was well-behaved

5. *Inventing Anna* is a television series about _____.
 - a) Anna's life in prison
 - b) the events surrounding Anna's story
 - c) the victims

Exercise 2: Read the passage again and answer the questions.

1. How did Anna Sorokin make money?

2. How did she get money to pay the hotel?

3. How did she get caught?

Exercise 3: Read the three replies to the question below. Then choose the best answer for each question in the table.



What are some money saving tips for teens?

By Marvel Wed Feb 18, 2023, 8:34 pm

I am 13 years old, and I'm kind of a spender person. I hang out with my friends A LOT and I need money for that, as well as paying for my phone bill each month. My natural instinct is to buy something, even if I don't need it. Any tips on how to save more money and not blow it on useless things?

Replies:

A. Re: What are some money saving tips for teens?

By Cyclops Tue Feb 19, 2023 4:58 pm

Have a budget: Keep a laptop where you check just how much you spend; then once a week look back during your log to see where your money went and what you buy. If you make it a habit to follow a budget from an early age, it gets easier as you grow older.

B. Re: What are some money saving tips for teens?

By LanaRay Sun Feb 23, 2023, 10:52 am

Learn to say No.

If every time you go out with friends you spend money, then occasionally say no to them. You will come off as more confident and it's a characteristic you will need when you grow up.

Also, when a pair of shoes that cost €100 is on sale with 30% off, you didn't save €30, you spent €70. That's the mentality you should have on spending.

Hope this helps.

C. Re: What are some money saving tips for teens?

By InstaJet Sun Mar 13, 2023, 13:07 pm

Use a prepaid debit card (ask your parents): I thought it would be difficult for me to save money because as teenagers we do not get as much money as we might like. However, I was pleasantly surprised to find out that it is not as hard as it looks because I can only spend that much; I can't overdraw or otherwise spend more than I have.

		Cyclops	LanaRay	InstaJet
1	Who says that having good money habits as a teenager will help for the future?	A	B	C
2	Who urges you to be honest?	A	B	C
3	Who talks about a method that allows you to spend up to that amount?	A	B	C
4	Who was successful in staying within a budget?	A	B	C
5	Who thinks that weekly checks will help stick to the budget?	A	B	C
6	Who suggests avoiding sales?	A	B	C
7	Who suggests listing a purchase every time you spend money?	A	B	C

Exercise 4: You want your English friend, Roger, to buy you some fruit and vegetables from the supermarket. Write an email to Roger to:

- ask Roger to buy you some fruit and vegetables from the supermarket.
- say what fruit and vegetables you want.
- say when you will give him the money.

Write about 100 words.

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Level CEFR A2

Answer Key!

Exercise 1

1. a, 2. c, 3. a, 4. c, 5. b

Exercise 2

1. By pretending she was a German heiress, she tricked people, hotels and banks into lending her money, 2. She managed to get a \$100,000 loan. 3. She deposited bad checks and used fake wire transfer receipts.

Exercise 3

1. A, 2. B, 3. C, 4. C, 5. A, 6.B, 7. A