

## Test Your Grammar Skills

### Match English Oxymorons – An Extract from a Novel

Check the meaning of each oxymoron, then complete the gaps in the story below:

safety hazard  
awfully nice  
school holiday  
same difference  
completely destroyed  
absolutely unsure  
unbiased opinion  
modern history  
young adult  
eloquent silence

perfectly normal  
tough love  
student teacher  
social outcast  
common courtesy  
foreign national  
deafening silence  
numbing sensation  
intense apathy  
group of individuals

act naturally  
bad luck  
all alone  
relative stranger  
open secret  
incredibly dull  
recent past  
accurate estimate  
non-alcoholic beer  
safe bet

“We met some guys in the pub last night, who at first seemed 1.\_\_\_\_\_. One of them, a former sniper called László, began telling us about a bit of 2.\_\_\_\_\_ he’d been having recently. I noticed he was downing 3.\_\_\_\_\_ and I listened to his story more out of 4.\_\_\_\_\_ than anything else.

“He said that he was a Hungarian 5.\_\_\_\_\_ who had been raised by his strict hard-working parents with 6.\_\_\_\_\_. As a 7.\_\_\_\_\_ his father had been a 8.\_\_\_\_\_ working at a 9.\_\_\_\_\_ college. One 10.\_\_\_\_\_ he took László for a long drive in their car, which was a bit of a 11.\_\_\_\_\_, because it didn’t have any indicators. Anyway, as this 12.\_\_\_\_\_ yakked on, I could see his pals were mocking him behind his back. It appeared to be an 13.\_\_\_\_\_ that László’s tales concerning his 14.\_\_\_\_\_ were nothing more than a complete fabrication.

“I tried to 15.\_\_\_\_\_, but to be honest I was 16.\_\_\_\_\_ what to do, since any comments I was able to make were met with a 17.\_\_\_\_\_. It was the 18.\_\_\_\_\_ to me whether László’s words were factual or not, but the 19.\_\_\_\_\_ around him looked on with 20.\_\_\_\_\_ expressions and an air of 21.\_\_\_\_\_. It became clear that László was a bit of a 22.\_\_\_\_\_, without any genuine confidants, and it was a 23.\_\_\_\_\_ that his supposed friends had been nothing more than mere hangers-on.

“This turned out to be an 24.\_\_\_\_\_, because after another half an hour or more of the sniper’s tall tales about his apparently vital role in 25.\_\_\_\_\_, his companions had melted away into the half-darkness one by one, until at last László sat silently before us, 26.\_\_\_\_\_. Sometimes an 27.\_\_\_\_\_ is more rewarding than a lengthy exchange, and I believe that László could feel this too, although he seemed crestfallen, his confidence perhaps 28.\_\_\_\_\_. As we ordered another round of drinks and finally got to know facets of the real László, he calmed down and the strange 29.\_\_\_\_\_ which had dogged me for most of the evening began to disperse. It really had been, in my 30.\_\_\_\_\_, a most unusual night.”

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