



4A Traders

SPEAKING

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

Look at the kinds of investment in the box. Put them in order from (1) the safest to (5) the riskiest.

futures contracts gold
 government bonds property
 stocks and shares

READING

1 Read the article and choose the best title, a, b or c.

- a Rene Rivkin: a success story
- b Rene Rivkin: the life of a financial criminal
- c Rene Rivkin: the rise and fall

2 Read the article again and insert the phrases a–g into the gaps 1–7.

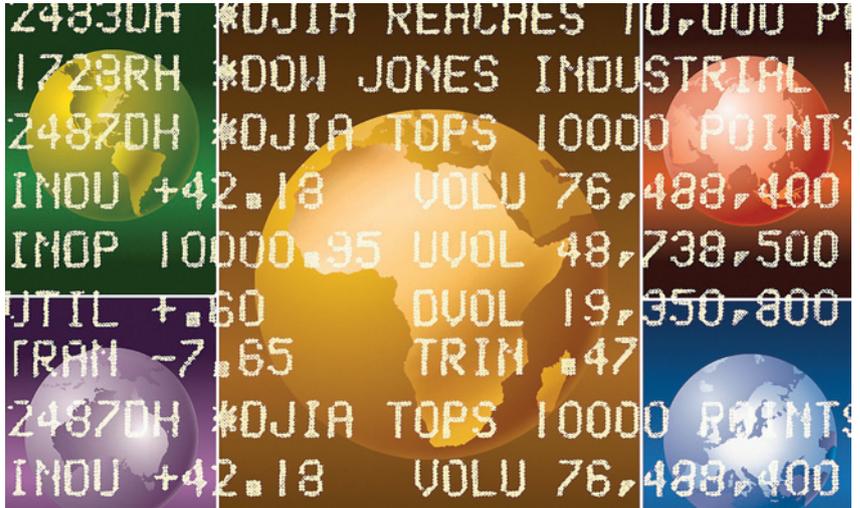
- a although Rivkin made very little money from it
- b but there was no happy ending
- c From his contacts in the business world
- d gold jewellery
- e sad and lonely
- f smoking a huge cigar
- g who was a government minister

3 Find information in the article to answer the questions.

- 1 In what ways was Rivkin a typical stockbroker?
- 2 In what ways was Rivkin 'flying high'?
- 3 Why were people later surprised that Rivkin's success lasted so long?
- 4 Why was Rivkin lucky to go to prison for nine months?
- 5 Why did he have nothing left to live for?

4 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- Do you feel any sympathy for Rene Rivkin? Why or why not?
- Do you know any other stories that are similar to Rivkin's story?



Rene Rivkin was, in many ways, the typical successful stockbroker. In photos that were taken at the height of his career, he was usually

(1) _____, wearing a flashy suit, and surrounded by good-looking young people. At the age of 41, a top Australian business magazine named him 'Stockbroker of the Year'. Rivkin was trading in stocks, investing in property and becoming extremely rich. He bought expensive cars, (2) _____, rare works of art and a nightclub. His friends included tycoons and politicians. He was, as they say, flying high.

Rivkin's glittering success lasted for only about fifteen years. Later, people were surprised that it lasted as long as it did. The beginning of the end came when police arrested a Swiss banker for fraud. When they were investigating the banker's dealings, they discovered information that was extremely embarrassing for Rivkin. He was using the Swiss bank to make secret payments to a friend (3) _____. Later that year, Rivkin was in even more trouble.

(4) _____, Rivkin learnt that Qantas (the Australian national airline) was going to merge with Impulse Airlines. Rivkin bought 50,000 Qantas shares, but, because the authorities were looking into his businesses, the deal soon became public knowledge. The Australian authorities took Rivkin to court, where he was found guilty of insider trading, a serious crime (5) _____. Rivkin was lucky: the judge sent him to prison for only nine months.

Rivkin was beginning his time in prison when he fell seriously ill. He had a brain tumour and needed surgery. Rivkin survived and completed his sentence, (6) _____. The authorities were continuing their investigations into Rivkin's business empire. His friends left him and his wife divorced him. Rivkin, (7) _____, was living with his mother when he took his own life. He was a man who had had everything, but, at the age of 60, he had nothing left to live for.

Glossary

flashy *adj* very bright, fashionable or expensive
 tycoon *n* rich and powerful businessman
 glittering *adj* exciting and successful
 fraud *n* the crime of getting money by telling lies
 merge *v* combine to make a bigger organization
 tumour *n* a group of cells in your body that grow in a way that is not normal
 sentence *n* punishment



GRAMMAR: past simple & past continuous

1 Work in pairs. Look at the sentences from the article below. Then complete the rules with *past simple* or *past continuous*.

When they were investigating, they discovered embarrassing information.

Use the _____ for completed past actions.
Use the _____ for actions that were in progress at a particular time in the past.
You often use the past continuous with the past simple. Use the _____ for longer activities.
Use the _____ for shorter, completed actions.
He was beginning his time in prison when he fell seriously ill.

SEE LANGUAGE REFERENCE PAGE 44

2 Complete the article with the verbs in brackets in the past simple or the past continuous.

In the late 1920s, US stock brokers (1) were having (have) the time of their lives. Prices (2) _____ (rise) and, in September 1929, the Dow Jones Industrial Average (3) _____ (reach) its highest point for six years. People (4) _____ (believe) that the good times would continue, but during the next six weeks, the market (5) _____ (be) different. Traders (6) _____ (buy and sell) large amounts of stock, but prices (7) _____ (fall) – slowly, but steadily. On Black Thursday, 24 October 1929, the Crash (8) _____ (come). Stocks (9) _____ (lose) 11% of their value and this (10) _____ (go) even lower in the next few days. At this time, Albert H Wiggin (11) _____ (work) as head of the Chase National Bank. The bank (12) _____ (do) well, but Wiggin knew that bad times (13) _____ (come). In September 1929, he (14) _____ (begin) short-selling* shares in his own bank. He (15) _____ (know) that he could buy them back later at a much lower price. In the Crash of 1929, thousands (16) _____ (lose) their jobs and savings. Wiggin (17) _____ (make) \$4 million. Many other senior bankers (18) _____ (do) the same.



* Short-selling is a kind of bet that prices will go down

PRONUNCIATION: was & were

1 Look at the dialogue. Should the underlined words be pronounced in their strong or weak forms? When do we use the strong forms of these words?

	strong	weak
was	/wɒz/	/wəz/
were	/wɜː/	/wə/

A: (1) Was he using inside knowledge?
 B: Yes, he (2) was. He (3) was a friend of the bank president.
 A: Do you think they (4) were both making money out of it?
 B: Yes. They (5) were making a lot of money, I think.
 A: A lot? I find that hard to believe.
 B: They (6) were! The papers said it (7) was millions.
 A: I knew he (8) was a criminal!

2 Work in pairs. Practise the dialogue with your partner.

VOCABULARY: idioms (taking risks)

1 Match the phrases in bold in sentences 1–6 to the definitions a–f.

- It's a bit of a gamble**, but I think we should give try it.
- There's a lot at stake** here, I really don't think it's a good idea.
- It's against the odds**, but you never know – maybe we'll win. What do you think?
- Well, I'm, not sure. We could take a risk and win a million or we could **play safe** and keep what we have.
- I never **try my luck** because I always lose.
- It's a lottery** – but if we don't play, we'll never win anything.

- you probably won't win
- take a risk
- there's a risk here, but it's only a small one
- if you lose, you could lose a lot
- it's a question of luck – anyone could win
- decide not to take a risk

2 Work in pairs. Discuss these questions.

- What are the risks involved in the following situations?
 - asking your boss for a pay rise
 - playing the lottery
 - walking home alone in the dark?
- Do you usually play it safe or do you like to try your luck?
- What was the last big risk that you took?