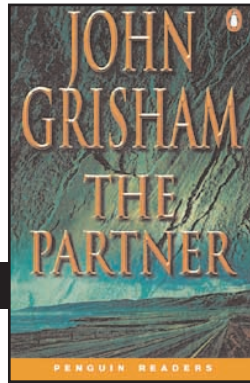


Teacher's notes

The Partner

by John Grisham



SUMMARY

The *Partner* is set in the mid-1990s in South America, and in the southern United States. The hero is Patrick Lanigan, a lawyer from Biloxi, Mississippi. Patrick is discovered living in a small town in Brazil under the name of Danilo Silva by Jack Stephano, a private detective. Stephano is working for Bogan Vitrano, Patrick's law firm in Biloxi, and Benny Aricia, a defense contractor, because Patrick has stolen their money. The FBI get a call and they quickly get Patrick away from Stephano and bring him back to the States.

Four years previously, Aricia pretended that his firm had cheated the US government out of \$600 million and employed Bogan Vitrano to tell the government. They get \$90 million for this. At the same time Patrick is planning to run away and start a new life since he is unhappy with his job and marriage. He fakes his death in a car crash, and on the day the \$90 million arrives at Bogan Vitrano Patrick diverts it to a bank in Malta. Then he goes to Brazil. He meets Eva Miranda and they fall in love.

The FBI try to convict Patrick for the murder of the man who died in the car-crash, and for stealing the money. His wife also divorces him and wants lots of his money. Patrick negotiates his way out of all his problems. He proves that Aricia and Bogan Vitrano stole the \$90 million, not him. He proves his wife was unfaithful to him and that he is not the father of their daughter. Then he tells the police that the man in the car was already dead and it was not murder. Patrick does not go to jail.

In the end Patrick goes to France to meet Eva. However, she does not turn up and the story ends with Patrick desperate and unhappy.

ABOUT JOHN GRISHAM

John Grisham was born in 1955 in Arkansas in the southern United States of America. He graduated from law school in 1981 and set up a one-man office. He often helped people in lawsuits against big companies, or to get compensation for accidents.

Grisham's first novel, *A Time to Kill* (1989), came from his experience of watching a young girl testify against a man who had raped her. The book was not a great success, but he worked very hard on his next novel, *The Firm*, and it was the best-selling novel of 1991. It became a big-budget film

starring Tom Cruise in 1993. Since then Grisham has produced a string of massively successful novels, many of which have become films. All his novels sell millions of copies, and they are available in thirty languages.

BACKGROUND AND THEMES

The Partner is typical of Grisham's extremely successful brand of story telling. There are several instantly recognizable themes: the legal setting, the small-time lawyer practising in the American South, and powerful forces against which the hero has to fight, for example the Mafia or the FBI.

The Partner has a large cast of characters and few of them are honest or decent. Grisham seems to be saying that the world we live in is corrupt, selfish, and greedy. To this extent he is part of the school of tough detective writers in the US such as Raymond Chandler, James Ellroy, and Patricia Cornwell.

The theme of greed for money runs throughout *The Partner*. Patrick's wife is not interested in him, only the insurance money she received after he disappeared. The government gets its \$90 million back, and demands 9% interest on it, too. At one point in the novel there are four different lawsuits as people and companies all try to recover money they think is theirs.

There is little love in the book, and this is the second main theme. Trudy does not love Patrick, Eva deserts him in the end, Pepper Scarborough hates his mother, Clovis Goodman's family leave him to die alone. In this novel only relationships that have a professional bond work. As soon as money problems mix with love and marriage the relationships fall apart.

Patrick's love for Eva is the most difficult part of the book to understand. It provides a bleak ending to the novel. This is unusual for John Grisham. Often his heroes lose everything, but get back safe and happy lives. In *The Partner*, the hero is left alone and distraught, with no future to look forward to.

The Partner is strong on plot. Grisham is a master at making a story move from one point to the next, and this is vital for a popular thriller writer. The characters are fairly standard and have no great depth. It is, though, one of his darkest novels so far.

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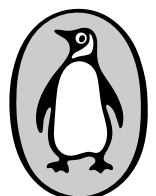
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UPPER
INTERMEDIATE

THE PARTNER



Teacher's notes

Communicative activities

The following teacher-led activities cover the same sections of text as the exercises at the back of the Reader, and supplement those exercises. Further supplementary exercises, covering shorter sections of the book, can found on the photocopiable Student's Activities pages of this Factsheet. These are primarily for use with class Readers, but with the exception of pair/groupwork questions, can also be used by students working alone in a self-access center.

ACTIVITIES BEFORE READING THE BOOK

Put students into small groups. Tell them to look first at the front cover and think about the author's name, the title and the cover illustration. What information do they get from the cover? What type of book is this going to be? What is a "partner"?

Next tell them to read the back cover. Does this information match what they thought? Ask them to think of an alternative title for the book based on this information. The groups can share their answers with the rest of the class.

ACTIVITIES AFTER READING A SECTION

Chapters 1-3

Write the names of these places on cards: Ponta Porta, Washington, Rio, Biloxi, San Juan Naval Base. On separate cards write these names: Eva Miranda, Danilo Silva, Jack Stephano, Joshua Cutter, Patrick Lanigan. Divide students into pairs and give a set of place cards to one student and a set of name cards to the other. They have to match the right cards. The first pair to finish wins.

Chapters 4-6

Divide students into groups. You need even numbers of groups. Each group has to write short descriptions of the characters on their list. Then 'A' Groups swap their descriptions with 'B' groups and each has to identify the people being described.

Group A – Trudy, Luis, Hamilton Jaynes.

Group B – Sandy McDermott, Cutter, Stephano.

Chapters 7-9

Divide students into pairs. They are Trudy and Lance Maxa. After they agree to Patrick's terms for the divorce what do they talk about? Students should write a dialogue about their daughter, and their affair while Trudy was still married. What will they do now? Students then read out their dialogue to the class.

Chapters 10-12

In groups students should think of alternative titles for these three chapters. In class students read out their three new titles, but not in order, and other groups have to guess which chapter they refer to. The group can then explain why they chose that title.

Chapters 13-15

In class students say if they agree or disagree with these statements, and why:

- Eva loves her father more than she loves Patrick.
- Patrick deserves to go to jail.

- Trudy does not deserve to keep her insurance money.

ACTIVITIES AFTER READING THE BOOK

Put students into groups and ask them to discuss the following:

- Who is the worst person and the best person in the book? Say why.
- There is no justice, only the power of money in *The Partner*. Is this true?
- Everyone in *The Partner* gets what they deserve.

Students share their views with the class.

Glossary

It will be useful for your students to know the following new words. They are practiced in the "Before You Read" sections of exercises at the back of the book.

Chapters 1-3

account (n) an arrangement you have with a bank to take in or pay out money

agent (n) someone who works for the government or police to get information or to catch criminals

arrest (v) to be taken away by the police because you have done something wrong

case (n) an event or events that need to be dealt with by the police and the courts

client (n) someone who pays for the services of another person or organization

fax (n) a document that is sent by telephone line and printed out at the other end

indict (v) officially to charge someone with a criminal offence

investigate (v) to try to find out the truth about a crime

needle (n) a thin pointed tube used to push drugs into the body

release (v) to let someone go free

torture (v) to hurt someone in order to make them tell you something

wire (v) to send money electronically from one bank to another

Chapters 4-6

allegation (n) a statement that someone has done something wrong which has not been proved

attorney (n) a lawyer, someone who advises and helps people with the law

charges (n) official statement that someone is guilty of a crime

death penalty (n) killing a person as punishment for breaking the law

divorce (n) the legal end of a marriage

drop (v) to stop doing something

evidence (n) information given in a court to show that someone is guilty

file (v) to officially record something

lawsuit (n) a charge made against someone or something in a court of law

press (n) people who write for newspapers, magazines, radio, television, etc

sue (v) to make claim against someone in court because they have harmed you

Chapters 7-9

bug (n) a small piece of electronic equipment to listen secretly to a private conversation

cabin (n) a small house built of wood in the forest or mountains

defendant (n) the person in court who has been accused of breaking the law

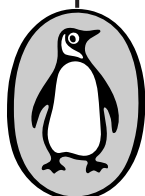
hearing (n) the meeting of a court

plea (n) a statement by someone in court saying they are guilty or not guilty

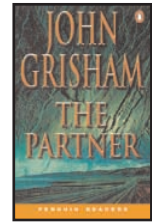
settlement (n) an official agreement that ends an argument between two sides

Chapters 10-12

Senator (n) a politician who sits in the Senate, one of the houses in US government



Student's activities



The Partner

Photocopiable

Students can answer these questions alone or with one or more other people.

Activities before reading the book

Think about the title of the book and read the description of it on the back cover.

- Write three things you think will happen in the book.
- Choose five of the words from the list that might be important in the story:
court, airplane, beach, investigate, client, boat, fax, daughter, run, fire, insurance, bug, divorce, pay, guilty

Activities while reading the book

CHAPTERS 1-3

Chapter 1

Say whether these sentences are right or wrong. If they are wrong correct them.

- Patrick's new name is Danilo.
- Guy is from Biloxi.
- The agents kidnap Danilo on the fifth day.
- Eva Miranda is in Sao Paolo.
- Joshua Cutter is an agent for the FBI.
- Stephano works for Guy.

Chapter 2

This is the story of Chapter 2. Put in the missing words from the list below:

board, Curitiba, electricity, frightened, Malta, March 26, money, name, plates, pushed, screamed, tired, Zurich

Danilo was lying on a (1)____. A doctor (2) ____ a needle into his arm. Patrick was extremely (3)____. They put metal (4)____ on him. Guy wanted to know where the (5)____ was. The men put (6)____ through his body and Patrick (7)____.

The money arrived in Nassau on (8)____ 1992. Patrick sent it to (9)____.

Eva was in (10)____. She was (11)____, but couldn't sleep. She changed her (12)____, and then flew to (13)____.

Chapter 3

Write down the conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Stephano at the end of the day in Chapter 3. Mrs. Stephano is very worried and asks her husband lots of questions. He has to tell her everything.

CHAPTERS 4-6

Chapter 4

Put the correct amounts of money in the sentences below.

- Patrick stole ____ dollars.
- Trudy received ____ dollars insurance.
- The law firm partners are suing Patrick for ____ dollars.
- Benny Aricia is suing Patrick for ____ dollars.
- Monarch-Sierra wants ____ dollars back from the law firm partners.

Chapter 5

Answer these questions.

- Why does Patrick give Luis \$500?
- Where does Sandy go with Leah?
- How long ago did Sandy last see Patrick?
- How does Patrick know about Trudy and the grand jury verdict?
- What three things does Luis bring Patrick?
- Why does Patrick want people to think the FBI tortured him?
- Does Patrick know who really tortured him?
- Why does Sandy need to be careful?

Chapter 6

Put these events in the right order. Write number 1-6 at the end of the sentence.

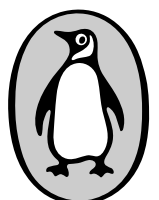
- Agent Myers takes Patrick to Biloxi. (__)
- Sandy talks to the reporters. (__)
- Patrick sees his mother. (__)
- Sheriff Sweeney gives Patrick two lawsuits. (__)
- Hamilton Jaynes threatens to arrest Benny Aricia. (__)
- Sheriff Sweeney meets Patrick. (__)

CHAPTERS 7-9

Chapter 7

Who are these people? Say what they do, if possible, and how they are connected to Patrick.

- Ted Grimshaw
- Dr. Hayani
- Neldene Crouch
- Pepper Scarborough
- Karl Huskey
- Charles Bogan and Doug Vitrano



Student's activities

- (g) T. L. Parrish
- (h) Nancy De Angelo
- (i) Ashley Nicole
- (j) Lance Maxa

Chapter 8

Finish these sentences.

- (a) Stephano had worked on the Lanigan case for ____.
- (b) Benny Aricia gave Stephano ____.
- (c) Aricia put the \$90 million in ____.
- (d) Patrick presented himself as ____.
- (e) Patrick listened to the bugged office ____.
- (f) Aricia and Guy went to ____.
- (g) Aricia hated ____.
- (h) Aricia got 15 percent ____.
- (i) Monarch paid out a total ____.
- (j) Patrick was seen in ____.

Chapter 9

Read these statements and then write down your thoughts with as much information as possible from this chapter.

- (a) Trudy is a bad wife and should not get any money or help from Patrick.
- (b) All Patrick cares about is money. He never really loved Trudy or his daughter.

CHAPTERS 10–12

Chapter 10

In this chapter Patrick says "I guess it sounds romantic, doesn't it? Disappearing and becoming somebody new. All your problems are left behind." Do you agree? Why/Why not? Would you like to become somebody new? Who would you become? And where would you go?

Chapter 11

Think about the following questions and then write down your answers.

- (a) Why is Eva helping Patrick? Does she really love him or does she want money? Would you do the things she does for Patrick? Why/Why not?
- (b) Patrick knew that Aricia and his partners at the law firm were planning to cheat the government. Why did he do nothing about it? Why did he gather evidence and keep it? What would you do in his position?

Chapter 12

In the sentences below find the wrong word and put in the correct one.

- (a) "We had court artists make pictures of his appearance."

- (b) "The apartment manager recognized him as Derek Boone, a British man."
- (c) "We agreed to take the million dollars."
- (g) "The man who did the questioning believes Mr. Lanigan didn't know where Eva was."

CHAPTERS 13–15

Chapter 13

Marck Birk needs a detailed account of how Eva was caught, so he can tell Patrick everything. Write down the conversation between Marck and Eva.

Chapter 14

Answer these questions.

- (a) Who calls Mrs. Stephano at 5.30 A.M.?
- (b) Who lives in Boca Raton?
- (c) Who tells Eva her father is free?
- (d) Who gets \$250,000 paid into a special account from Monarch-Sierra?

Chapter 15

1 This chapter is divided into 12 parts. Think of a title for each part and write it down.

2 Look at the list of people below. Say who is left unhappy or happy at the end of the book, and say why.

- (a) Eva Miranda
- (b) Deena Postell
- (c) J. Murray Riddleton
- (d) Benny Aricia
- (e) Sandy McDermott
- (f) Patrick Lanigan

Activities after reading the book

1 "It's the system, Patrick. If you aren't punished, then you've bought your way out of jail. Everybody looks bad." (page 74)

Do you think this is a good summary of *The Partner*? Is it true? Say why or why not and write down your answers.

2 After one year Eva comes to see Patrick in Aix. Write a dialogue for them. Think about these things: Where has Eva been? Why did she stay away, and will she stay now? How does Patrick feel after a year alone? Does he still want her, or the money? Can they live together now?

3 Look at "Activities before reading the book" question (b). Which five words from the list would you choose now?

