

CRIME-WRITING PRACTICE

Use the information below on a local crime to create a simple disaster story. Incorporate two human sources and make sure to attribute your information properly, especially if you are discussing key aspects of the crime:

POLICE PRESS RELEASE:

At 10:32 p.m., police officers responded to the Speed-E-Mart, 123 E. Main St., after receiving a 9-1-1 call. When officers arrived, they found the store's clerk, later identified as Sam Walther, bleeding from the forehead. In an interview with Walther, officers discerned that 20 minutes earlier, two men entered the store and approached the counter. Both men had bandanas over their noses and mouths and wore sunglasses to hide their faces.

One of the men displayed a handgun, shoved a cloth sack into Walther's hands and demanded that Walther empty the register. Walther began to comply when the man with the gun became impatient and struck him in the face with the gun. Walther lost consciousness and fell behind the counter. When he awoke, he found the register empty and the men gone. He then called 9-1-1.

LT. BILLY BERG, OFFICER IN CHARGE:

"We arrived to find Mr. Walther in a state of confusion. He had clearly been struck in the head with something and he had been bleeding. The paramedics patched him up but he was still shaken so we are going to keep an eye on him. He was able to tell us what happened and it sound like two other robberies we had this week at other convenience stores in the city. The suspects in each of the cases displayed a gun and demanded that the cashier fill a cloth sack. That said, this is the first time someone was injured during the robbery, and that concerns us. We don't like to see any crimes, but an escalation of violence is extremely problematic. We don't believe Mr. Walther did anything to antagonize these people."

"We work with gas stations, mini-marts and other similar businesses on how best to handle a situation like this. The biggest thing we tell the workers is that they should always comply and never feel bad about handing over the money. The money is insured and your life isn't worth whatever is in the register. Your boss will understand."

"The suspects did a good job of disguising themselves, as we can only say they're both about 6-foot tall and about 200 pounds. We have no hair color, eye color or race information. In two of the robberies, however, the clerks noted they arrived in a mid-1970s Ford pickup truck that was really beat up. It was white with about 50 overlapping bumper stickers on the tailgate. It also had those tiny spare "donut" tires on the two front wheels. Other than that, we have no information about these people."

SAM WALTHER, CLERK:

"It all happened so fast. This white truck pulls up and these guys get out and I'm not thinking anything of it. All of a sudden, they're at the counter and one of them has a gun in my face. It was the scariest thing I've ever seen. I froze."

"They kept saying, 'Fill the bag,' 'Fill the bag,' and I'm trying to fill the bag but my hands don't feel like they're working, but I'm trying to do this. All of a sudden, the guy with the gun makes a

move and everything goes black. I was so happy to wake up, even though my head hurt like crazy. I thought I was dead. I figured he shot me.”

“I don’t feel good about any of this, but I guess it’s a bit better that the police know this is going on and that I’m not the only one who had this happen to them. I don’t know what else I could have done, but I’m hoping I never have this happen to me again.”