Teacher's Key

Cockpit Security and the Flydubai Attack: What Might Change (Level B1)

Vocabulary Matching

1 plunged = **N**
2 allegedly = **A**
3 motive = **H**
4 overpowered = **L**
5 reinforced = **G**
6 intruders = **M**
7 optional = **I**
8 screening = **E**
9 flagged = **D**
10 barred = **O**
11 convictions = **J**
12 diplomatic relations = **K**
13 loophole = **B**
14 tighten = **C**
15 insider = **F**

Fill in the Blank

1 plunged
2 allegedly
3 motive
4 overpowered
5 reinforced
6 intruders
7 optional
8 screening
9 flagged
10 barred
11 convictions
12 loophole
13 tighten
14 insider

True or False

1 **True.** Flight-tracking data show this.
2 **False.** It was going from Dubai to Tel Aviv.
3 **False.** They say the weapon was the cockpit's emergency axe.
4 **True.** They took the controls and landed in Tabuk.
5 **False.** It landed in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia.
6 **True.** ICAO required stronger cockpit doors after the attacks.
7 **False.** It happened in 2015.
8 **True.** The reading names Europe's EASA as one of them.
9 **True.** The reading says Oman has no formal ties to Israel, which is why the prime minister spoke of a loophole.
10 **False.** Israel says it has agreements to keep some pilots off its flights.

Language Focus: Past Simple and Past Continuous

Example answer: Last night I **was watching** the news when my phone **rang**.

Comprehension Questions: Model Answers

1 The flight was going from Dubai to Tel Aviv. About two hours after takeoff, the plane suddenly plunged more than 5,000 meters in about two minutes.

2 The cockpit's emergency axe, a tool that most passenger planes carry for emergencies such as fires.

3 Although he was badly hurt, he opened the locked cockpit door. This let passengers and crew come in. Experts say getting into a locked cockpit from outside would otherwise have been almost impossible.

4 Passengers and crew rushed in and overpowered the co-pilot. Two other pilots who were on board took the controls and landed the plane in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia.

5 To stop intruders from entering the cockpit and taking control of the plane, as happened in the attacks on September 11, 2001. ICAO required stronger doors that can resist small-arms fire.

6 The door that keeps intruders out can also keep the rest of the crew out. In 2015, a Germanwings co-pilot locked the captain out and flew the plane into the French Alps. It shows that a danger can come from inside the cockpit.

7 Screening: passengers go through metal detectors, but the rules for crew can be different and may be only random checks. Israel's prime minister said the co-pilot may not have been required to pass through a metal detector, but UAE officials say the weapon was already in the cockpit. Background checks: officials say the co-pilot had been flagged and barred from flying in his home country, flydubai's checks appear to have looked mainly for criminal convictions, and Israel's agreements did not stop an Omani pilot (a loophole).

8 Any two: Israel tightening checks on all flights, including foreign airlines; Israel checking the identities of all pilots; Israel's review of foreign airlines' security; heavier screening for crew; more information sharing between countries; more attention to the insider.

9 Open answer. Accept two reasons, such as: crew have access to the plane and could cause harm (for the same screening); crew are already trained and checked, and extra checks cost time and money (against); the weapon in this case was already in the cockpit, so screening may not help (against).

10 False. The reading says that in early October neither airline had confirmed the reports in public.

11 No. The writer says the doors were built to stop intruders and do that job well. The problem is that a locked door cannot protect pilots from someone already inside.

12 Best answer: to show a problem that is still hard to solve. The last sentence asks a question and gives no answer. Accept a reasoned answer about the balance between keeping danger out and letting help in.

Notes on the Evidence

- Sources and dates. The reading reflects reports through October 4, 2026. Main sources: Associated Press (October 2 and 4, via ABC News and PBS), Al Jazeera (October 1 and 3), The National (October 1), CBC and NBC News (October 3), ABC News (October 2 to 4), Newsweek (October 3). I opened the AP (ABC News and PBS), Al Jazeera (October 3), and The National pages. CNN (which blocked automated access), Time, NBC, CBC, Newsweek, The Conversation, and an Al Jazeera feature of October 1 were used through search results only. The investigation is led by the UAE, with Saudi and Israeli authorities, and help from the United States and Oman. Every detail about the co-pilot's past (the Oman Air suspension, the extremist concerns, the hiring by flydubai) comes from unnamed officials and sources, and neither airline had confirmed it publicly by October 3 (Newsweek). The reading does not name the co-pilot, gives no religion, and uses attributions and the word allegedly. Recheck before publishing: the UAE's findings, any announced motive, whether any charge has been filed, and whether flydubai has resumed Tel Aviv flights.
- Discrepancies. Number of people on board: 182 including eight crew (AP), 174 (Al Jazeera), 180 (other outlets); the reading says around 180. Weapon: early reports said a knife or a stabbing; on October 3 the UAE attorney general said a crash axe (AP, CBC, NBC, Al Jazeera). Israel's prime minister said on October 1 that the co-pilot may not have been required to pass through a metal detector (CNN, search result); the reading keeps this as the prime minister's view and adds the UAE finding about the axe. The two pilots who landed the plane are called reserve pilots (Al Jazeera) and off-duty pilots (The National); the reading says two other pilots who were on board. Flight data (Flightradar24, via Al Jazeera): departure 7:05 a.m. Dubai time at 34,000 feet, a drop of more than 17,000 feet in about two minutes, a landing at 9:45 a.m. local time. 34,000 feet is about 10,400 meters and 17,000 feet is about 5,200 meters. How the captain opened the door is not yet confirmed; CNN notes that most planes have a control-panel switch for the door, but this is not confirmed for this flight, so the reading does not say how he did it.
- Rules. ICAO required reinforced cockpit doors after September 11, 2001, strong enough to resist small-arms fire (The National); ICAO standards say the door can be locked or unlocked from either pilot seat (Al Jazeera feature, October 1). The two-person rule followed the 2015 Germanwings crash (150 deaths); the EU's EASA later gave airlines the choice, and Lufthansa Group dropped it in 2017 (The National). In the United States the FAA already required two people in the cockpit in 2015 (NPR), and a newer FAA rule requires a secondary barrier on newly built planes only (Time, search snippet). Neither US point is in the reading but both are useful for discussion. On crew screening, ICAO says everyone on board must be screened, but the details for crew can differ, and some countries use random checks (The National, quoting a professor of aviation law and The Conversation).
- Israel and vetting. Israel's prime minister said Israel has long-standing agreements with foreign airlines to keep out pilots from countries without diplomatic relations with Israel, and that there was a loophole (AP, October 2). AP also notes that Israel and Oman have no formal diplomatic relations. A spokesperson said Israel will check the identities of pilots on all flights into the country. On October 4 the prime minister ordered an examiner to review security for foreign civil aviation to Israel (AP via PBS). The same report says, citing regional officials who did not give their names, that the UAE shared a passenger and crew list with Israel and that Israel raised no concern; Israeli institutions disagree about who was responsible. A Gulf diplomat said the co-pilot passed standard checks that appear to have looked mainly for criminal convictions (AP). The reading leaves out the Israeli election campaign, the regional war, and the suspect's links to other countries, because they are outside the topic and not fully reported.
- Opinion and evidence. Statements about what may change are the views of named experts (for example Israel's former national security adviser on heavier crew screening, and one aviation security expert on a possible compliance failure), not decisions. The statement that the captain saved everyone is attributed to Israel's prime minister. The final question in the reading is the writer's framing, not a claim of fact. The reading is an original text based on the sources above and does not copy their wording.