

Venus and Serena to do reality TV (Thu 31 Mar, 2005)

WARM-UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about tennis / Serena and Venus Williams / reality TV / tennis court / fun / interior design / fashion / rules for loving and winning / ... Change topic / partner frequently to increase conversation.

VENUS BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Venus Williams. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

REALITY TV: Would a reality TV show of your daily life be interesting? Would people in another country like to see it? Make notes on what the TV cameras would see if they followed you every day, at home and outside. Share what you have written with your partner / group. Decide between you if it is interesting enough to make a reality TV show. How could you make it more interesting?

WILLIAMS SISTERS OPINIONS: Read these people's opinions about the Williams sisters. What do you think of each opinion?

- a. "I used to think they were bad for tennis because they kept winning everything, but now they have to really compete and often get knocked out, so now I like them."
- b. "They shouldn't wear those crazy colours. They should respect tennis tradition and wear white."
- c. "I can't wait for their reality TV show. I really want to know about their private lives." "Venus and Serena are refreshing role models for our kids."
- d. "I wish I had even half the determination of those two young women."
- e. "They make way too much noise on the tennis court."
- f. "They like to think they are independent, but really, their father pulls the strings."
- g. "They are true, clean and modern sporting heroes."
- h. "Those two are much more interesting than male tennis stars."
- i. "I think they have many dark secrets and that one day lots of scandals will come out."

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'reality' and 'TV'.

TRUE FALSE: Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. The Venus and Serena in the headline are the superstar tennis sisters. T / F
- b. A reality TV series will look into their boring and ordinary lives. T / F
- c. This series will give viewers a window into their very exciting off-court lives. T / F
- d. You will not see them interacting with their family and friends. T / F
- e. Serena is very interested in the branches of trees. T / F
- f. The sisters have between them won 32 grand slam tennis titles. T / F
- g. The sisters co-wrote a motivational book for young girls. T / F
- h. The sisters are nice people at the end of the day. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| (a) via | remarkable |
| (b) air | glimpse |
| (c) extraordinary | basically |
| (d) renowned | area |
| (e) window | through |
| (f) branch out | principles |
| (g) medium | famous |
| (h) morals | pride |
| (i) self-esteem | expand |
| (j) at the end of the day | broadcast |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| (a) will soon be | into |
| (b) ABC network will | self-esteem |
| (c) look | out |
| (d) internationally | time have high morals |
| (e) see them at | coming into American homes |
| (f) branch | the day |
| (g) inside | look at our lives |
| (h) and at the same | renowned |
| (i) high | their best |
| (j) at the end of | air six episodes of the show |

GAP FILL

Venus and Serena to do reality TV

BNE: Superstar tennis sisters Serena and Venus Williams will soon be coming into American homes _____ a new reality TV series. The ABC network will air six _____ of the show starting in July. It will look into the _____ and extraordinary lives of Venus and Serena both on and off of the tennis court. An ABC Family spokesperson said, “We are _____ to be working with these dynamic, internationally renowned, talented stars.... This series will give viewers a window into their very exciting off-court lives.” According to the website, “You’ll see them interacting with their family and friends, find out what they do for fun, and also see them _____ on the court.”

glamorous
at their best
episodes
thrilled
via

Serena said of her new show, “We’re very excited to _____ into a new medium. The series will provide our fans with an _____, inside look at our lives.” The sisters, who between them have eleven grand slam titles, have already branched out into various _____ projects: Venus with interior design and Serena with fashion. They _____ a motivational book for young girls called *Venus and Serena: Serving From the Hip: 10 Rules for Living, Loving, and Winning*. The book tells young girls that, “you can be like us; you can be successful and at the same time have high morals and high _____ and be a very nice person at the end of the day.”

non-tennis
up-close
self-esteem
branch out
co-wrote

HOMEWORK

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google’s search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on Venus or Serena. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. REALITY ME TV:** Write a brief plan about a new reality TV series starring yourself. Present your plan in the next class.
- 4. MY RULE BOOK:** The Williams sisters co-wrote a book called *Venus and Serena: Serving From the Hip: 10 Rules for Living, Loving, and Winning*. Make a mini advice sheet of your own. Call it *Three Rules for Living, Loving and Studying English*. Share your three rules for living, loving and studying English in your next class.

DISCUSSION:

- a. What was interesting in this article?
- b. Were you surprised by anything in this article?
- c. What do you think of the Williams sisters?
- d. Which sister do you like better?
- e. Are you into tennis?
- f. Are you into reality TV?
- g. Do you want to watch the Venus and Serena reality TV series?
- h. Are the Williams sisters perfect role models for young girls?
- i. Which person would you like to see in a reality TV series?
- j. Would you like a window into the life of someone you know?
- k. Would you like to be the subject of a reality TV series?
- l. What do you do for fun?
- m. When are you at your best?
- n. What would you like to branch out into?
- o. What rules would you give for loving, living and winning?
- p. Do you have high or low self-esteem?
- q. What high morals do you have?
- r. At the end of the day, are you a nice person?
- s. Did you like this discussion?
- t. Teacher / Student additional questions.

TEXT

Venus and Serena to do reality TV

BNE: Superstar tennis sisters Serena and Venus Williams will soon be coming into American homes **via** a new reality TV series. The ABC network will air six **episodes** of the show starting in July. It will look into the **glamorous** and extraordinary lives of Venus and Serena both on and off of the tennis court. An ABC Family spokesperson said, “We are **thrilled** to be working with these dynamic, internationally renowned, talented stars.... This series will give viewers a window into their very exciting off-court lives.” According to the website, “You’ll see them interacting with their family and friends, find out what they do for fun, and also see them **at their best** on the court.”

Serena said of her new show, “We’re very excited to **branch out** into a new medium. The series will provide our fans with an **up-close**, inside look at our lives.” The sisters, who between them have eleven grand slam titles, have already branched out into various **non-tennis** projects: Venus with interior design and Serena with fashion. They **co-wrote** a motivational book for young girls called *Venus and Serena: Serving From the Hip: 10 Rules for Living, Loving, and Winning*. The book tells young girls that, “you can be like us; you can be successful and at the same time have high morals and high **self-esteem** and be a very nice person at the end of the day.”

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