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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

Everest wedding

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4 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Everest wedding

BNE: A Nepalese couple felt on top of the world on their wedding day. No surprise, as they got married on top of Mount Everest. Moni Mule Pati, 24, and Pem Dorjee Sherpa, 23, exchanged wedding vows atop of the world's highest peak, becoming the first people ever to get married on the summit. It truly was a match made in, or at least as close as possible to, heaven. Even the guest was left breathless.

There was little of the usual paraphernalia that surrounds weddings. Just oxygen tanks, climbing equipment and some plastic garlands and traditional vermilion powder, which the groom applied on the bride's forehead. They did have some quite spectacular Himalayan views as a backdrop for their weddings pics. The nuptials took just ten minutes and then the happy couple had to descend due to the bitingly cold conditions.

The newlyweds had kept their plan secret, just in case their wedding plans were thwarted by avalanches, freezing winds or faulty oxygen masks. They didn't have time to fulfill all of the religious requirements necessary in their Hindu wedding, and so will complete formalities at a ceremony in Kathmandu. Pem Dorjee said: "With our interracial marriage, we also wanted to give the message that caste and race are no barriers when it comes to marriage."

WARM-UPS

1. EVEREST WEDDING: Imagine you have just got back from your wedding on top of Mount Everest. Talk to as many people as you can about your happy day (or happy ten minutes). You will be surprised to find out that all of your classmates also got married at the same place!

2. MOUNT EVEREST: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Mount Everest. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them.

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Nepal / Mount Everest / on top of the world / wedding day / wedding vows / heaven / oxygen tanks / Himalayas / biting cold / Hindu ceremonies / interracial marriages / caste systems

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. STORY PREDICTION: In pairs / groups, use the words from the “CHAT” activity to predict how the story in the article will unfold. Change partners and compare your stories. If you have different interpretations or ideas, talk about which is likelier to be in the actual article.

5. WEDDINGS: Do you think it’s best to have a traditional wedding or a wedding that’s a little different? In pairs / groups, talk about these different wedding venues. Which one(s) would you choose for a wedding? Which are no-nos / is a no-no?

- a. On top of Mount Everest.
- b. In a hot air balloon above an African wildlife reserve.
- c. Under the sea in Australia’s Great Barrier Reef.
- d. In Baghdad – the cradle of civilization.
- e. In space.
- f. On the sports field of your favorite team, an hour before a big game starts.
- g. Your idea.

6. ON TOP OF THE WORLD: In pairs/ groups, tell each other a time you were on top of the world (or just very happy)....

- Earlier today
- Yesterday
- Last week
- Last month
- Last year

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. A couple felt on top of the world on their wedding day. | T / F |
| b. One hundred couples have now married on Everest's peak. | T / F |
| c. There was little wedding paraphernalia at the summit ceremony. | T / F |
| d. Spectacular ocean views formed a backdrop for their wedding pics. | T / F |
| e. The nuptials took just ten minutes because of the cold. | T / F |
| f. The newlyweds had told their families about their wedding. | T / F |
| g. They will also have a formal ceremony in the Nepalese capital. | T / F |
| h. They said it was a race and that many barriers were cast aside. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| a. on top of the world | astounded |
| b. vows | stymied |
| c. breathless | background |
| d. paraphernalia | honeymooners |
| e. backdrop | promises |
| f. nuptials | marriage |
| g. bitingly | in seventh heaven |
| h. newlyweds | social class |
| i. thwarted | accouterments |
| j. caste | bitterly |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. felt on top | wedding vows |
| b. exchanged | paraphernalia |
| c. the world's highest | marriage |
| d. little of the usual | powder |
| e. traditional vermillion | when it comes to marriage |
| f. bitingly | were thwarted |
| g. in case their wedding plans | of the world |
| h. fulfill all of | peak |
| i. interracial | the religious requirements |
| j. caste and race are no barriers | cold conditions |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

SYNONYM FILL: Place the number of the synonym group in the correct gap (It is not important to guess a correct word - any of the synonyms from each group could be put into the relevant gap).

Everest wedding

BNE: A Nepalese couple felt _____ on their wedding day. No surprise, as they got married on top of Mount Everest. Moni Mule Pati, 24, and Pem Dorjee Sherpa, 23, exchanged wedding vows atop of the world's highest peak, becoming the first people ever to get married on the summit. It truly was a match made in, or at least as close as possible to, heaven. Even the guest was left _____.

There was little of the usual _____ that surrounds weddings. Just oxygen tanks, climbing equipment and some plastic garlands and traditional vermilion powder, which the groom applied on the bride's forehead. They did have some quite spectacular Himalayan views as a backdrop for their wedding pics. The nuptials took just ten minutes and then the _____ had to descend due to the bitingly cold conditions.

The newlyweds had kept their plan secret, just in case their wedding plans were _____ by avalanches, freezing winds or faulty oxygen masks. They didn't have time to fulfill all of the religious requirements necessary in their Hindu wedding, and so will complete formalities at a ceremony in Kathmandu. Pem Dorjee said: "With our interracial marriage, we also wanted to give the message that _____ and race are no barriers when it comes to marriage."

1
caste
social class
rank
station

2
happy couple
bride and groom
newlyweds
honeymooners

3
on top of the world
in seventh heaven
on cloud nine
over the moon

4
thwarted
stymied
hindered
impeded

5
paraphernalia
accouterments
trappings
gear

6
breathless
astounded
agog
flabbergasted

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'wedding'** and **'vows'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. SYNONYM FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the synonym fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT WEDDING DAY SURVEY: In pairs / groups write down questions about wedding days.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make a mini-presentation to another group / the class on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- felt
- atop
- match
- breathless
- paraphernalia
- vermilion
- backdrop
- bitinglly
- thwarted
- fulfill
- formalities
- barriers

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your image when you read the headline?
- b. Did the headline arouse your curiosity?
- c. Are you surprised they are the first couple to wed atop of Everest?
- d. What do you think of the idea of Everest weddings?
- e. What do you think of the Nepalese couple?
- f. Would you like to climb Mount Everest?
- g. Do you think you would need different wedding vows on top of the world?
- h. What would your family say if you told them you had plans to marry on top of Mount Everest?
- i. Is there anywhere in the world more spectacular to get married?
- j. Where do you recommend the couple go on honeymoon?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading the article?
- b. How did this news make you feel?
- c. Would you like to get married on top of Mount Everest?
- d. Will the couple have an extra special marriage for getting married on top of Mount Everest?
- e. Would you like an Everest wedding or a conventional wedding?
- f. If you chose a very unconventional wedding, what would you do?
- g. If you got married on top of Mt. Everest, what would you take (apart from oxygen)?
- h. Would you consider an interracial marriage?
- i. Are there any barriers when it comes to marriage?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

ADVENTURE WEDDINGS: You are the chief organizer of the company "Adventure Weddings". The weddings your company offers are (1) Everest, (2) Hot air balloon over Africa, (3) Great Barrier Reef (underwater), (4) Baghdad – the cradle of civilization or (5) Your choice. In pairs / groups, decide on the wedding you want to work on. Discuss the details for each of the points in the table below:

POINTS	DETAILS FOR _____ WEDDING
A catchy name for the adventure wedding	
A slogan	
A special vow attached to this wedding	
Wedding attire	
Guests	
Food	
Gifts / mementoes for the guests	
Music	
Main wedding picture background	

After you have finished, change partners / groups. Show your new partner(s) your wedding plans. Give advice on how your respective plans could be made better.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Everest wedding

BNE: A Nepalese couple felt _____ on their wedding day. No surprise, as they got married on top of Mount Everest. Moni Mule Pati, 24, and Pem Dorjee Sherpa, 23, exchanged wedding _____ world's highest peak, becoming the first people ever to get married on the summit. It truly was a match made in, _____ close as possible to, heaven. Even the guest was left breathless.

There was _____ paraphernalia that surrounds weddings. Just oxygen tanks, climbing equipment and some plastic garlands and _____, which the groom applied on the bride's forehead. They did have some quite spectacular Himalayan views as a backdrop for their weddings pics. The nuptials took just ten minutes and then the happy couple had to descend _____ cold conditions.

The newlyweds had kept their plan secret, just in case their wedding plans were _____, freezing winds or faulty oxygen masks. They didn't have time to fulfill all of the religious requirements necessary in their Hindu wedding, and so _____ at a ceremony in Kathmandu. Pem Dorjee said: "With our interracial marriage, we also wanted to give the message that _____ are no barriers when it comes to marriage."

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 more information on Mount Everest. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. DIFFERENT WEDDING: Plan a wedding with a difference. Explain all of the details that make the wedding so different. Show your wedding ideas to your classmates in your next lesson. Talk about whether the plans are good or not so good (or really bad).

4. MY COUNTRY: Write a description of a typical wedding in your country. Show it to your classmates in your next lesson. Find similarities in the weddings you described.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. T d. F e. T f. F g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| a. on top of the world | in seventh heaven |
| b. vows | promises |
| c. breathless | astounded |
| d. paraphernalia | accouterments |
| e. backdrop | background |
| f. nuptials | marriage |
| g. bitingly | bitterly |
| h. newlyweds | honeymooners |
| i. thwarted | stymied |
| j. caste | social class |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. felt on top | of the world |
| b. exchanged | wedding vows |
| c. the world's highest | peak |
| d. little of the usual | paraphernalia |
| e. traditional vermillion | powder |
| f. bitingly | cold conditions |
| g. in case their wedding plans | were thwarted |
| h. fulfill all of | the religious requirements |
| i. interracial | marriage |
| j. caste and race are no barriers | when it comes to marriage |

SYNONYM FILL:

Everest Wedding

BNE: A Nepalese couple felt **---3---** on their wedding day. No surprise, as they got married on top of Mount Everest. Moni Mule Pati, 24, and Pem Dorjee Sherpa, 23, exchanged wedding vows atop of the world's highest peak, becoming the first people ever to get married on the summit. It truly was a match made in, or at least as close as possible to, heaven. Even the guest was left **---6---**.

There was little of the usual **---5---** that surrounds weddings. Just oxygen tanks, climbing equipment and some plastic garlands and traditional vermillion powder, which the groom applied on the bride's forehead. They did have some quite spectacular Himalayan views as a backdrop for their wedding pics. The nuptials took just ten minutes and then the **---2---** had to descend due to the biting cold conditions.

The newlyweds had kept their plan secret, just in case their wedding plans were **---4---** by avalanches, freezing winds or faulty oxygen masks. They didn't have time to fulfill all of the religious requirements necessary in their Hindu wedding, and so will complete formalities at a ceremony in Kathmandu. Pem Dorjee said: "With our interracial marriage, we also wanted to give the message that **---1---** and race are no barriers when it comes to marriage."