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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

Celebrity boosts breast cancer action

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8 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Celebrity boosts breast cancer action

BNE: Actress and pop star Kylie Minogue has been attributed with initiating an increase in the number of women having breast cancer screenings in Australia. Ms. Minogue's widely-publicized breast cancer ordeal in May resulted in a 40 per cent increase in mammogram bookings, according to a study by Sydney University's Professor Simon Chapman. He said there was double the number of first-time screenings for women aged between 40-69. The so-called "Kylie effect" could slash the number of breast-cancer related deaths. Ms. Minogue was diagnosed with cancer in May and underwent surgery to have a lump removed, attracting worldwide attention. She emphasized how critical it was for the cancer to be detected early.

Professor Chapman, reporting in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, believes news coverage of celebrity illnesses "can precipitate dramatic changes in consumer behavior." He urged health agencies to take advantage of such media attention to raise public awareness: "Health advocates should develop anticipatory strategies for responding to news coverage of celebrity illness." He also highlighted the huge amounts of free publicity generated by the media, which could substantially cut advertising spending. He said: "Capitalizing on the interest generated by celebrity illnesses can increase news coverage of health topics to levels that would ordinarily require huge campaign budgets."

Source: <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6EY9BR>

WARM-UPS

1. AWKWARD TOPICS: There are many topics that are often not talked about. In pairs / groups, talk your feelings on the topics of conversation below. Would you feel comfortable talking about these topics with the people in the column on the right?

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Breast cancer | • |
| • Death | • Best friend |
| • Bad breath and B.O. (body odor) | • Boss |
| • Salaries | • English teacher |
| • Sexual problems | • Partner |
| • Choice of election candidates | • Mother |
| • Feelings towards other ethnic groups | • Father |
| • Toilet habits | • Colleague |
| • Other _____ | |

2. HEALTH CHECKS: Are you in tip-top condition? Do you regularly have health checks? In pairs / groups, talk about going to the doctor. Talk also about the things you do to look after your body and the things you do that might harm your body.

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

Actress / pop star / Kylie Minogue / breast cancer / cancer / screenings / surgery / celebrities / celebrity illnesses / consumer behavior / news coverage / doctors

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

4. CANCER: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "cancer". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. OPINIONS: In pairs / groups, talk about how far you agree with the following opinions on cancer and health:

- A cure for all cancers will be found within the next decade.
- Half of the money spent on weapons should be redirected for medical research.
- Governments should ban products that harm our bodies, such as cigarettes.
- An annual health check should be free for all citizens.
- Celebrities should be more open about their illnesses increase awareness of health.
- We have a duty to God to look after our bodies.
- People who don't exercise, who smoke and over-eat should pay higher hospital bills.
- Cancer should be top of the list of medical problems that need to be cured.

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 top celebrity has given millions of dollars to cancer research. T / F
- b. The celebrity had breast cancer. T / F
- c. The celebrity's illness encouraged women to have breast screenings. T / F
- d. The celebrity toured the world to focus attention on cancer. T / F
- e. A professor thinks celebrity illnesses can change consumer behavior. T / F
- f. The professor called for the use of celebrities for health campaigns. T / F
- g. The professor asked the media to broadcast more health stories. T / F
- h. The professor asked news agencies to donate to health campaigns. T / F

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

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| a. attributed | reduce |
| b. bookings | reacting |
| c. slash | increase |
| d. underwent | taking advantage of |
| e. critical | reservations |
| f. precipitate | normally |
| g. responding | had |
| h. substantially | crucial |
| i. capitalizing | credited |
| j. ordinarily | significantly |

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. ... attributed with initiating | "Kylie effect" |
| b. slash the number of | of free publicity |
| c. The so-called | to be detected early |
| d. underwent | in consumer behavior |
| e. how critical it was for the cancer | breast-cancer related deaths |
| f. precipitate dramatic changes | generated by celebrity illnesses |
| g. develop | an increase in the number of ... |
| h. the huge amounts | surgery |
| i. capitalizing on the interest | require huge campaign budgets |
| j. levels that would ordinarily | anticipatory strategies |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

WHICH WORD? Strike through the incorrect word from the pairs in **bold**.

Celebrity boosts breast cancer action

BNE: Actress and pop star Kylie Minogue has been attributed with **initiating** / **initialing** an increase in the number of women having breast cancer **viewings** / **screenings** in Australia. Ms. Minogue's widely-publicized breast cancer **order** / **ordeal** in May resulted in a 40 per cent increase in mammogram bookings, according to a study by Sydney University's Professor Simon Chapman. He said there was double the number of first-time screenings for women aged between 40-69. The so-called "Kylie effect" could **slash** / **slush** the number of breast-cancer related deaths. Ms. Minogue was diagnosed with cancer in May and underwent surgery to have a **bump** / **lump** removed, attracting worldwide attention. She emphasized how critical it was for the cancer to be **detected** / **deterred** early.

Professor Chapman, reporting in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, believes news **covering** / **coverage** of celebrity illnesses "can **precipitate** / **pre-empt** dramatic changes in consumer behavior." He urged health agencies to take advantage of such media attention to raise public awareness: "Health **advocates** / **avocadoes** should develop **anticipatory** / **antiseptic** strategies for responding to news coverage of celebrity illness." He also highlighted the huge amounts of free publicity generated by the media, which could substantially **increase** / **cut** advertising spending. He said: "Capitalizing on the **commission** / **interest** generated by celebrity illnesses can increase news coverage of health topics to levels that would ordinarily require huge campaign budgets."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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. WHICH WORD? In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. 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 "CANCER" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about cancer.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups 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:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| • attributed | • dramatic |
| • ordeal | • agencies |
| • double | • anticipatory |
| • so-called | • publicity |
| • underwent | • capitalizing |
| • critical | • huge |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you know about Kylie Minogue?
- d. Do you think celebrities should promote health issues?
- e. Are you worried about cancer?
- f. Have you ever been checked for possible signs of cancer?
- g. Does the thought of cancer make you change your lifestyle in any way (stop smoking, exercise more, eat more healthily etc)?
- h. What do you know about cancer?
- i. How important is a cure for cancer in comparison with other diseases and illnesses?
- j. Have you ever undergone surgery?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you know anyone who has or has suffered from cancer?
- d. Do you often read about health issues in the media?
- e. What areas of health are you most concerned about?
- f. Is it a good idea for health agencies to anticipate celebrity illness?
- g. Should schools spend more time educating children about cancer and other terminal conditions?
- h. Are you currently worried about any aspects of your health?
- i. Do you take good health for granted?
- 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

HEALTH PROMOTION: In pairs / groups, decide on the top three things people should do to look after the body parts / areas listed below.

BODY PART	THINGS TO DO TO CARE FOR BODY PART / AREA
Heart	1. 2. 3.
Brain	1. 2. 3.
Skin	1. 2. 3.
Lungs	1. 2. 3.
Hair	1. 2. 3.
Teeth	1. 2. 3.

Change partners and compare your ideas. Make sure you agree on the best things to do to look after yourself.

In pairs / groups, talk about whether you do all of the things on your list.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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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 cancer. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. MY HEALTH: Write an essay about your health history. Explain the main points of your essay to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. LETTER TO KYLIE: Write a letter to Kylie Minogue about her battle to overcome cancer and her part in raising awareness of breast cancer worldwide. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. attributed	credited
b. bookings	reservations
c. slash	reduce
d. underwent	had
e. critical	crucial
f. precipitate	increase
g. responding	reacting
h. substantially	significantly
i. capitalizing	taking advantage of
j. ordinarily	normally

PHRASE MATCH:

a. ... attributed with initiating	an increase in the number of ...
b. slash the number of	breast-cancer related deaths
c. The so-called	"Kylie effect"
d. underwent	surgery
e. how critical it was for the cancer	to be detected early
f. precipitate dramatic changes	in consumer behavior
g. develop	anticipatory strategies
h. the huge amounts	of free publicity
i. capitalizing on the interest	generated by celebrity illnesses
j. levels that would ordinarily	require huge campaign budgets

WHICH WORD?

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