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Baracks and Obamas born in Kenya

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8th November, 2008

THE ARTICLE

Barack Obama's popularity has sparked a new baby-naming craze in Kenya. More than half of the male babies born at a hospital in Kisumu province on the day of the U.S. election were named Barack. Kisumu is the area Obama's father came from. Another popular name for baby boys was Obama. In Swahili, the name Barack means 'blessed one'. Many parents were calling their newborn daughters Michelle, the name of Barack Obama's wife and soon to be America's First Lady. People from all across Kenya were thrilled with Barack Obama's election victory and many celebrated in the streets. The new President-elect has become a national hero in Kenya. A long lasting legacy of his election win will be the number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing up in Kenya.

It is not unusual for parents to name their children after actors, pop stars or sports heroes. New Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton was named after the U.S. Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis. It is more unusual for newborns to be named after politicians. It might be interesting to know how many parents named their baby after outgoing U.S. president George W. Bush. One Kenyan mother, Pamela Adhiambo, gave birth to twins on November the 5th. She named her new son and daughter Barack and Michelle. She told the AFP news agency: "I made up my mind to name them long before the elections, and even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same." Ms Adhiambo added she hoped naming her children in this way would bring them success in life.

WARM-UPS

1. NAMES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about names. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

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

popularity / baby names / hospitals / meaning of names / being thrilled / legacies / actors / pop stars / sports heroes / politicians / twins / parents / success in life

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. NAMES: What are your favourite names? Complete the table below. Share what you wrote with your partner(s).

Favourite...	Why I like this name
boy's name	
girl's name	
actor's name	
singer's name	
sports star name	
politician's name	

4. NAMING: Students A **strongly** believe it is wrong for parents to name their child after a famous person; Students B **strongly** believe naming a child after a famous person will help them in life. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. NAMED FOR LIFE: With your partner(s), discuss what kind of life babies with these names might have. Share your ideas with other students.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harmony• Pele• Earth• Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Profit• Power• Butterfly• Time
---	---

6. BABY: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'baby'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Barack Obama's new child was born in Kenya last week. | T / F |
| b. Barack Obama's father was born in Kenya. | T / F |
| c. Kenyan's were disappointed with Barack Obama's election victory. | T / F |
| d. There are more children called Barack in Obama today than before. | T / F |
| e. It isn't so common for children to be named after famous people. | T / F |
| f. A famous car racing driver was named after an Olympic gold medalist. | T / F |
| g. There are many parents who name their children after politicians. | T / F |
| h. A Kenyan said she called her son Barack so he'd be successful in life. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. sparked | a. departing |
| 2. craze | b. manner |
| 3. blessed | c. fashion |
| 4. thrilled | d. uncommon |
| 5. legacy | e. excited |
| 6. unusual | f. decided |
| 7. outgoing | g. started |
| 8. made up one's mind | h. produce |
| 9. way | i. effect |
| 10. bring | j. lucky |

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

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Obama's popularity has sparked a new baby- | a. up in Kenya |
| 2. In Swahili, the name Barack means | b. hero |
| 3. People from all across Kenya were | c. my mind |
| 4. The new President-elect has become a national | d. actors |
| 5. the number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing | e. naming craze |
| 6. name their children after | f. in life |
| 7. gave birth to | g. thrilled |
| 8. I made up | h. twins |
| 9. I would still have done | i. 'blessed one' |
| 10. bring them success | j. the same |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Barack Obama's popularity has _____ a new baby-naming craze in Kenya. More than _____ of the male babies born at a hospital in Kisumu province on the day of the U.S. election were named Barack. Kisumu is the _____ Obama's father came from. Another popular name for baby boys was Obama. In Swahili, the name Barack means 'blessed _____'. Many parents were calling their newborn daughters Michelle, the name of Barack Obama's wife and _____ to be America's First Lady. People from all across Kenya were thrilled with Barack Obama's election _____ and many celebrated in the streets. The new President-elect has become a national _____ in Kenya. A long lasting _____ of his election win will be the number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing up in Kenya.

It is not _____ for parents to name their children after actors, pop stars or sports _____. New Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton was named after the U.S. Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis. It is _____ unusual for newborns to be named after politicians. It _____ be interesting to know how many parents named their baby after outgoing U.S. president George W. Bush. One Kenyan mother, Pamela Adhiambo, gave _____ to twins on November the 5th. She named her new son and daughter Barack and Michelle. She told the AFP news agency: "I made up my _____ to name them _____ before the elections, and even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same." Ms Adhiambo added she hoped naming her children in this way would bring them _____ in life.

victory

area

soon

legacy

sparked

hero

half

one

mind

might

heroes

success

birth

long

unusual

more

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Barack Obama's popularity _____ baby-naming craze in Kenya. More _____ babies born at a hospital in Kisumu province on the day of the U.S. election were named Barack. Kisumu is the area Obama's father came from. Another popular name for baby boys was Obama. In Swahili, the name Obama _____. Many parents were calling their newborn daughters Michelle, the name of Barack Obama's _____ America's First Lady. People from all across Kenya were thrilled with Barack Obama's election victory and many celebrated in the streets. The new President-elect has become _____ Kenya. A long lasting legacy of his election _____ number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing up in Kenya.

_____ parents to name their children after actors, pop stars or sports heroes. New Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton was named after the U.S. Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis. _____ for newborns to be named after politicians. It might be interesting _____ parents named their baby after outgoing U.S. president George W. Bush. One Kenyan mother, Pamela Adhiambo, gave _____ November the 5th. She named her new son and daughter Barack and Michelle. She told the AFP news agency: "I made up my mind to name _____ the elections, and even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same." Ms Adhiambo added _____ her children in this way would bring them success in life.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

baby	name
-------------	-------------

- 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. GAP FILL: 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. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sparked• half• means• soon• streets• legacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• unusual• gold• interesting• birth• mind• hoped
--	---

STUDENT BABY NAMES SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about baby names in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

OBAMA AND HIS NAMES DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'name'?
- c) Do you like your name?
- d) What do you think of the name Barack or Obama?
- e) What do you think of Kenyan parents naming their child after Barack Obama?
- f) What would you think of parents naming their baby after the leader of your country?
- g) Did you feel like celebrating Obama's election victory?
- h) What are the most popular names for babies in your country?
- i) Why do you think Obama is a national hero in Kenya?
- j) Do you think Barack Obama is a "blessed one"?

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OBAMA AND HIS NAMES DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) How were you named?
- c) Would you name your child after a famous person?
- d) Do you think Lewis Hamilton's love of speed came from his name coming from a 100-metre sprint champion?
- e) If you changed your name, what new name would you choose?
- f) Do you think people named their newborn sons after George W. Bush?
- g) What would you think about if you had to name a child?
- h) What do you think of parents who give their children strange names?
- i) Do you think a name can bring success to someone's life?
- j) What questions would you like to ask mother Pamela Adhiambo?

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LANGUAGE

Barack Obama's popularity has (1) _____ a new baby-naming craze in Kenya. More than half (2) _____ the male babies born at a hospital in Kisumu province on the day of the U.S. election were named Barack. Kisumu is the area Obama's father came from. Another (3) _____ name for baby boys was Obama. In Swahili, the name Barack means 'blessed one'. Many parents were calling their newborn daughters Michelle, the name of Barack Obama's wife and (4) _____ to be America's First Lady. People from all across Kenya were (5) _____ with Barack Obama's election victory and many celebrated in the streets. The new President-elect has become a national hero in Kenya. A (6) _____ lasting legacy of his election win will be the number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing up in Kenya.

It is (7) _____ unusual for parents to name their children after actors, pop stars or sports heroes. New Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton was named after the U.S. Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis. It is (8) _____ unusual for newborns to be named after politicians. It might be interesting to know how many parents named their baby after (9) _____ U.S. president George W. Bush. One Kenyan mother, Pamela Adhiambo, gave (10) _____ to twins on November the 5th. She named her new son and daughter Barack and Michelle. She told the AFP news agency: "I made up my (11) _____ to name them long before the elections, and even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same." Ms Adhiambo added she hoped naming her children in this (12) _____ would bring them success in life.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) spooked | (b) sparkled | (c) spanked | (d) sparked |
| 2. | (a) with | (b) for | (c) of | (d) by |
| 3. | (a) popularity | (b) popular | (c) popularize | (d) population |
| 4. | (a) soon | (b) soonish | (c) sooner | (d) soonest |
| 5. | (a) thrills | (b) thrilling | (c) thrilled | (d) thriller |
| 6. | (a) longing | (b) length | (c) longest | (d) long |
| 7. | (a) non | (b) not | (c) nor | (d) no |
| 8. | (a) more | (b) many | (c) all | (d) greater |
| 9. | (a) incoming | (b) outgoing | (c) inviting | (d) outclassing |
| 10. | (a) childbirth | (b) born | (c) birth | (d) baby |
| 11. | (a) mind | (b) minds | (c) minder | (d) minding |
| 12. | (a) way out | (b) weigh | (c) ways | (d) way |

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 out more about Barack Obama's name. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MY NAME: Make a poster about your name. Include its history, what it means, and how you feel about it. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. TWO BARACKS: Write a magazine article about the new baby-naming craze in Kenya. Include imaginary interviews with Barack Obama and one of the babies named after him.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Barack Obama. Ask him/her three questions about his name. Give him/her your three ideas on what he should do now he's President. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. sparked | a. started |
| 2. craze | b. fashion |
| 3. blessed | c. lucky |
| 4. thrilled | d. excited |
| 5. legacy | e. effect |
| 6. unusual | f. uncommon |
| 7. outgoing | g. departing |
| 8. made up one's mind | h. decided |
| 9. way | i. manner |
| 10. bring | j. produce |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Obama's popularity has sparked a new baby- | a. naming craze |
| 2. In Swahili, the name Barack means | b. 'blessed one' |
| 3. People from all across Kenya were | c. thrilled |
| 4. The new President-elect has become a national | d. hero |
| 5. the number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing | e. up in Kenya |
| 6. name their children after | f. actors |
| 7. gave birth to | g. twins |
| 8. I made up | h. my mind |
| 9. I would still have done | i. the same |
| 10. bring them success | j. in life |

GAP FILL:

Baracks and Obamas born in Kenya

Barack Obama's popularity has **sparked** a new baby-naming craze in Kenya. More than **half** of the male babies born at a hospital in Kisumu province on the day of the U.S. election were named Barack. Kisumu is the **area** Obama's father came from. Another popular name for baby boys was Obama. In Swahili, the name Barack means 'blessed **one**'. Many parents were calling their newborn daughters Michelle, the name of Barack Obama's wife and **soon** to be America's First Lady. People from all across Kenya were thrilled with Barack Obama's election **victory** and many celebrated in the streets. The new President-elect has become a national **hero** in Kenya. A long lasting **legacy** of his election win will be the number of Baracks, Obamas and Michelles growing up in Kenya.

It is not **unusual** for parents to name their children after actors, pop stars or sports **heroes**. New Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton was named after the U.S. Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis. It is **more** unusual for newborns to be named after politicians. It **might** be interesting to know how many parents named their baby after outgoing U.S. president George W. Bush. One Kenyan mother, Pamela Adhiambo, gave **birth** to twins on November the 5th. She named her new son and daughter Barack and Michelle. She told the AFP news agency: "I made up my **mind** to name them **long** before the elections, and even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same." Ms Adhiambo added she hoped naming her children in this way would bring them **success** in life.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - c 3 - b 4 - a 5 - c 6 - d 7 - b 8 - a 9 - b 10 - c 11 - a 12 - d