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Woman with 99 wrong birthdays

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10th May, 2009

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

A British woman got her birthday wrong for 99 years. Emily Donaghue was born in 1909 and always celebrated her birthday on May the 3rd. Before her 100th birthday, her son, 78-year-old John, found her real date of birth. She was really born on May the 5th. She was born two days later than she thought. The family found the mistake when they sent a copy of Emily's birth certificate to Britain's Queen Elizabeth. The Queen sends every British person a telegram on their 100th birthday. John Donaghue doesn't know why his mother got her birthday wrong.

I will never forget my birthday. I know that. It is too special. I remember because I get lots of presents, cake and other stuff. I have also seen my birth certificate, so I can't make a mistake. And my date of birth is on my passport. I don't know how Emily made a mistake. Perhaps birthdays weren't important a long time ago. No one can forget their birthday these days. Our date of birth is in hundreds of different computers. I think this is a funny but nice story. I will remember it on my birthdays. I hope I live to be one hundred.

PHRASE MATCH

Match the following phrases from the article.

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. celebrated | a. found the mistake |
| 2. date | b. certificate |
| 3. two days later | c. of birth |
| 4. The family | d. than she thought |
| 5. birth | e. birthday |
| 6. 100th | f. her birthday |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. I will never forget | a. special |
| 2. It is too | b. days |
| 3. make a | c. time ago |
| 4. a long | d. my birthday |
| 5. these | e. to be one hundred |
| 6. I hope I live | f. mistake |

LISTENING GAP FILL

A British woman got her birthday _____ years. Emily Donaghue was born in 1909 and always _____ birthday on May the 3rd. Before her 100th birthday, her son, 78-year-old John, found _____ birth. She was really born on May the 5th. She was born two days _____ thought. The family found the mistake when they sent a copy of Emily's birth _____ Britain's Queen Elizabeth. The Queen sends every British person a telegram _____ birthday. John Donaghue doesn't know why his mother got her birthday wrong.

I will _____ birthday. I know that. It is too special. I remember because I get lots of presents, cake _____. I have also seen my birth certificate, so I can't _____. And my date of birth is on my passport. I don't know how Emily made a mistake. Perhaps birthdays weren't important _____. No one can forget their birthday these days. Our date of birth is in hundreds of different computers. I think this _____ nice story. I will remember it on my birthdays. _____ one hundred.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

A British woman (1) _____ her birthday wrong for 99 years. Emily Donaghue was born in 1909 and always (2) _____ her birthday on May the 3rd. Before her 100th birthday, her son, 78-year-old John, found her real (3) _____ of birth. She was really born on May the 5th. She was born two days (4) _____ than she thought. The family found the mistake when they sent a copy of Emily's birth certificate to Britain's Queen Elizabeth. The Queen sends every British (5) _____ a telegram on their 100th birthday. John Donaghue doesn't know why his mother got her birthday wrong.

I will never forget my birthday. I know that. It is too special. I remember because I get lots of presents, cake and (6) _____ stuff. I have also (7) _____ my birth certificate, so I can't make a mistake. And my date of birth is on my passport. I don't know how Emily made a mistake. Perhaps birthdays weren't important a long time (8) _____. No one can forget their birthday these days. Our date of birth is in hundreds of (9) _____ computers. I think this is a funny but nice story. I will remember it on my birthdays. I (10) _____ I live to be one hundred.

Put the correct words from this table into the article.

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) forgot | (b) get | (c) got |
| 2. | (a) celebration | (b) celebrates | (c) celebrated |
| 3. | (a) date | (b) dates | (c) dated |
| 4. | (a) after | (b) later | (c) past |
| 5. | (a) people | (b) person | (c) persons |
| 6. | (a) other | (b) others | (c) another |
| 7. | (a) saw | (b) seen | (c) seeing |
| 8. | (a) ages | (b) age | (c) ago |
| 9. | (a) differ | (b) different | (c) difference |
| 10. | (a) hope | (b) wishing | (c) want |

SPELLING

Spell the jumbled words (from the text) correctly.

Paragraph 1

1. A British onwma
2. adrlceeteb her birthday
3. later than she ouhttgh
4. birth cteciftarie
5. every British sreonp
6. a tegremal

Paragraph 2

7. never tfrgeo
8. too pieacls
9. lots of rseetpns
10. rapntoitm a long time ago
11. hundreds of firdtneef computers
12. live to be one rnhdeud

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () I will never forget my birthday. I know that. It is too special. I remember because I get lots of presents, cake and
- (**1**) A British woman got her birthday wrong for 99 years. Emily Donaghue was born in 1909 and always celebrated
- () mistake when they sent a copy of Emily's birth certificate to Britain's Queen Elizabeth. The Queen sends
- () ago. No one can forget their birthday these days. Our date of birth is in hundreds of different computers. I think this is
- () every British person a telegram on their 100th birthday. John Donaghue doesn't know why his mother got her birthday wrong.
- () a funny but nice story. I will remember it on my birthdays. I hope I live to be one hundred.
- () birth. She was really born on May the 5th. She was born two days later than she thought. The family found the
- () other stuff. I have also seen my birth certificate, so I can't make a mistake. And my date of birth is on my
- () passport. I don't know how Emily made a mistake. Perhaps birthdays weren't important a long time
- () her birthday on May the 3rd. Before her 100th birthday, her son, 78-year-old John, found her real date of

SCRAMBLED SENTENCES

With a partner, put the words back into the correct order.

1. woman British A wrong birthday her got.

2. birthday on Always May celebrated the her 3rd.

3. on She May was the really 5th born.

4. than born later thought was days she She two.

5. certificate A of birth copy Emily's.

6. will forget birthday I never my.

7. I get lots of presents , cake and other stuff.

8. I certificate birth my seen also have.

9. is My on date my of passport birth.

10. to I be hope one I hundred live.

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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 about birthdays. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about birthdays. Include imaginary interviews with a person who is ten today and a person who is one hundred today.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

4. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to a one-hundred-year-old person. Ask him/her three questions about his/her birthdays. Tell him/her three of your opinions on birthdays.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner will answer the questions you asked.