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‘Miracle’ baby elephant cheats death

MANY FLASH AND ONLINE ACTIVITIES FOR THIS LESSON, PLUS A LISTENING, AT:

<http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

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ALL ANSWERS ARE IN THE TEXT ON PAGE 2.

11th March, 2010

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

Today we have some lovely news from Sydney, Australia. It's about a baby elephant that was born alive, even when zookeepers thought it was dead. The calf became trapped inside its mother during its nine-day birth. It showed no signs of life. Staff at the zoo were shocked when it was born alive. A few hours later it was walking around. The zoo's director, Cameron Kerr, called it a miracle. Baby elephants usually never survive such difficulties at birth. Mr. Kerr was extremely happy, saying: "The birth will completely re-write the elephant birth text books."

It's nice to hear a happy story for a change. Most of the news we hear is about war, or death, or disasters. The story of this baby elephant will make people smile. It is amazing the calf survived for nine days. It's also amazing the mother survived. It must be pretty difficult to spend nine days trying to give birth – even for an elephant. I'm sure the whole world will follow the news of this baby elephant as it grows up. It will become a superstar among elephants. It's also good news for the zoo. The baby will attract lots more visitors.

PHRASE MATCH

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

Match the following phrases from the article.

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Today we have some lovely | a. signs of life |
| 2. zookeepers thought | b. birth text books |
| 3. It showed no | c. birth |
| 4. A few hours later it was | d. news from Sydney |
| 5. difficulties at | e. it was dead |
| 6. re-write the elephant | f. walking around |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. hear a happy story for | a. trying to give birth |
| 2. Most of the news we hear | b. difficult |
| 3. It must be pretty | c. more visitors |
| 4. spend nine days | d. a change |
| 5. the whole world will follow | e. is about war |
| 6. attract lots | f. the news |

LISTENING GAP FILL

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

Today we _____ news from Sydney, Australia. It's about a baby elephant that was born alive, even when zookeepers _____. The calf became trapped inside its mother during its nine-day birth. It _____ life. Staff at the zoo were shocked when it was born alive. A few hours _____ around. The zoo's director, Cameron Kerr, called it a miracle. Baby elephants usually _____ difficulties at birth. Mr. Kerr was extremely happy, saying: "The birth will _____ elephant birth text books."

It's nice to hear a happy story _____. Most of the _____ about war, or death, or disasters. The story of this baby elephant will make people smile. It is amazing the calf _____ days. It's also amazing the mother survived. It _____ to spend nine days trying to give birth – even for an elephant. I'm sure the whole world will _____ this baby elephant as it grows up. It will become a superstar among elephants. It's also good news for the zoo. The baby _____ visitors.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

Today we have some (1) _____ news from Sydney, Australia. It's about a baby elephant that was born alive, even when zookeepers thought it was dead. The calf became trapped inside its mother (2) _____ its nine-day birth. It showed no signs of life. Staff at the zoo were shocked when it was born (3) _____. A few hours later it was walking around. The zoo's director, Cameron Kerr, called it a miracle. Baby elephants usually never survive (4) _____ difficulties at birth. Mr. Kerr was extremely happy, saying: "The birth will (5) _____ re-write the elephant birth text books."

It's nice to hear a happy story for a (6) _____. Most of the news we hear is about war, or (7) _____, or disasters. The story of this baby elephant will make people smile. It is amazing the calf survived for nine days. It's also amazing the mother survived. It must be (8) _____ difficult to spend nine days trying to give birth – even for an elephant. I'm sure the whole world will follow the news of this baby elephant as it (9) _____ up. It will become a superstar among elephants. It's also good news for the zoo. The baby will (10) _____ lots more visitors.

Put the correct words from this table into the article.

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) love | (b) loving | (c) lovely |
| 2. | (a) during | (b) while | (c) between |
| 3. | (a) life | (b) lively | (c) alive |
| 4. | (a) so | (b) such | (c) much |
| 5. | (a) completely | (b) complete | (c) completion |
| 6. | (a) chance | (b) charge | (c) change |
| 7. | (a) dead | (b) death | (c) die |
| 8. | (a) cute | (b) beautiful | (c) pretty |
| 9. | (a) growth | (b) grows | (c) growing |
| 10. | (a) attract | (b) attraction | (c) attractive |

SPELLING

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

Spell the jumbled words (from the text) correctly.

Paragraph 1

1. some evllyo news
2. born laiev
3. The calf became rppeatd
4. showed no gniss of life
5. usually never vuesvir
6. txeyelmre happy

Paragraph 2

7. for a cegnha
8. make people lmsie
9. rttpey difficult
10. oflwol the news
11. a superstar nogma elephants
12. ttacatr lots more visitors

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100311-miracles.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () walking around. The zoo's director, Cameron Kerr, called it a miracle. Baby elephants usually never survive such
- () birth – even for an elephant. I'm sure the whole world will follow the news of this baby elephant as it grows
- () day birth. It showed no signs of life. Staff at the zoo were shocked when it was born alive. A few hours later it was
- () disasters. The story of this baby elephant will make people smile. It is amazing the calf survived for nine
- () It's nice to hear a happy story for a change. Most of the news we hear is about war, or death, or
- () up. It will become a superstar among elephants. It's also good news for the zoo. The baby will attract lots more visitors.
- () when zookeepers thought it was dead. The calf became trapped inside its mother during its nine-
- () days. It's also amazing the mother survived. It must be pretty difficult to spend nine days trying to give
- (**1**) Today we have some lovely news from Sydney, Australia. It's about a baby elephant that was born alive, even
- () difficulties at birth. Mr. Kerr was extremely happy, saying: "The birth will completely re-write the elephant birth text books."

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

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

1. Sydney some lovely Today news we from have.

2. was a that alive about elephant born It's baby.

3. when it was born Staff at the zoo were shocked.

4. few walking hours around later it A was.

5. the elephant Re-write birth text write books.

6. hear a happy story for a change It's nice to.

7. Most news is the hear war of we about.

8. Spend birth give to trying days nine.

9. news the follow will world whole The.

10. elephants among superstar a become will It.

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. MIRACLE ELEPHANT: Search the Internet and find more information about the miracle baby elephant. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about miracles. Include imaginary an interview with someone who experienced a miracle. 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 the baby elephant. Ask it three questions about its life so far. Give it three of your opinions on what it should do in its life. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner will answer the questions you asked.