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Madeleine McCann mystery deepens

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12th September, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Madeleine McCann mystery deepens

The investigation into the disappearance of the four-year-old British girl Madeleine McCann continued yesterday with new “evidence” from Portuguese police. Detectives told reporters that they will start conducting new searches for the missing daughter of Gerry and Kate McCann. There will be a new search of the resort where the little girl mysteriously vanished on the third of May. Investigators gave no further reasons why they will reopen the hunt after calling off the official search a month ago. There are also new reports that blood found in the McCanns’ hire car was a full match to Madeleine’s DNA. The public prosecutor in Portugal will now assess whether charges should be brought against the couple. Earlier this week, the police formally stated that Madeleine’s parents were suspects in the case.

Meanwhile, back in their home in England, the McCanns are trying to recover from the ordeal of being followed by a media circus for the past four months. They told reporters that they will return to Portugal to continue their own search for their daughter. However, more agony might be piled on them by social workers and police in Britain, who are meeting to discuss the safety of the McCanns’ two-year-old twins. The fact that the parents left all three of their children alone at their holiday apartment on the night Madeleine disappeared will figure strongly in the discussions. A local government official said a “lengthy assessment” would take place before deciding if the twins are “at risk”. The couple continue to tell reporters that the claims they had anything to do with their child’s disappearance are “ludicrous”.

WARM-UPS

1. NEWS REPORTING: Walk around the class and talk to other students about news reporting. How does it affect them? Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

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

investigation / evidence / mysteries / detectives / resorts / blood / DNA / suspects / ordeals / media circuses / agony / social workers / twins / reporters

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

3. MEDIA CIRCUSES: Do you think newspapers and television are sometimes more interested in gossip and scandal than real news? Discuss this with your partner(s). You might want to use these examples:

- Madeleine McCann
- a famous singer
- a famous actor
- a politician
- a TV star
- a sports star
- other _____

4. NEWS: Which of these media do you like best? Talk about this with your partner(s). Give them a score from 10 (absolutely fantastic) to 1 (terrible).

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • television | • broadsheet newspapers |
| • the Internet | • magazines |
| • radio | • podcasts |
| • tabloid newspapers | • other _____ |

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

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think newspapers and television are more interested in real news. Students B think newspapers and television are more interested in gossip. Change partners often. Share your findings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Investigators have found new evidence in the Madeleine case. | T / F |
| b. Detectives will search of the resort Madeleine disappeared from. | T / F |
| c. Blood matching Madeleine's was found in the parents' hire car. | T / F |
| d. Portuguese police do not suspect the parents of any involvement. | T / F |
| e. Madeleine's parents are still in Portugal searching for her. | T / F |
| f. British police will discuss the safety of the parents' other children. | T / F |
| g. Madeleine was left completely alone the night she vanished. | T / F |
| h. The parents think it is ludicrous they are suspected of wrongdoing. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. disappearance | a. absurd |
| 2. evidence | b. evaluate |
| 3. conducting | c. pain |
| 4. assess | d. proof |
| 5. formally | e. nightmare |
| 6. ordeal | f. vanishing |
| 7. agony | g. heaped |
| 8. piled | h. officially |
| 9. figure | i. carrying out |
| 10. ludicrous | j. play a part |

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

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. The investigation into the | a. calling off the official search |
| 2. a new search of the resort where the | b. would take place |
| 3. they will reopen the hunt after | c. followed by a media circus |
| 4. blood found in the McCanns' hire car | d. little girl mysteriously vanished |
| 5. police formally stated that | e. in the discussions |
| 6. recover from the ordeal of being | f. was a full match to Madeleine's |
| 7. more agony might be | g. disappearance of the four-year-old |
| 8. figure strongly | h. are "at risk" |
| 9. a "lengthy assessment" | i. Madeleine's parents were suspects |
| 10. before deciding if the twins | j. piled on them by social workers |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Madeleine McCann mystery deepens

The investigation _____ the disappearance of the four-year-old British girl Madeleine McCann continued yesterday with new "_____" from Portuguese police. Detectives told reporters that they will start _____ new searches for the missing daughter of Gerry and Kate McCann. There will be a new search of the resort where the little girl mysteriously _____ on the third of May. Investigators gave no further reasons why they will reopen the hunt after calling _____ the official search a month ago. There are also new reports that blood found in the McCanns' hire car was a full _____ to Madeleine's DNA. The public prosecutor in Portugal will now assess whether charges should be brought _____ the couple. Earlier this week, the police formally stated that Madeleine's parents were _____ in the case.

Meanwhile, back in their home in England, the McCanns are trying to recover from the _____ of being followed by a media _____ for the past four months. They told reporters that they will return to Portugal to continue their own search for their daughter. However, more _____ might be piled on them by social workers and police in Britain, who are meeting to discuss the _____ of the McCanns' two-year-old twins. The fact that the parents left all three of their children alone at their holiday apartment on the night Madeleine disappeared will figure _____ in the discussions. A local government official said a "_____ assessment" would take place before deciding if the twins are "at _____". The couple continue to tell reporters that the claims they had anything to do with their child's disappearance are "_____".

against
evidence
vanished
match
into
off
conducting
suspects

agony
ludicrous
ordeal
lengthy
safety
circus
risk
strongly

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Madeleine McCann mystery deepens

The investigation _____ the four-year-old British girl Madeleine McCann continued yesterday with new "evidence" from Portuguese police. Detectives told reporters _____ new searches for the missing daughter of Gerry and Kate McCann. There will be a new search of the resort _____ vanished on the third of May. Investigators gave no further reasons why they will reopen the hunt _____ search a month ago. There are also new reports that blood found in the McCanns' hire car was a full match to Madeleine's DNA. The public prosecutor in Portugal _____ charges should be brought against the couple. Earlier this week, the police formally stated that Madeleine's parents were suspects in the case.

Meanwhile, back in their home in England, the McCanns are trying to recover _____ followed by a media circus for the past four months. They told reporters that they will return to Portugal to continue _____ daughter. However, more agony might be piled on them by social workers and police in Britain, _____ the safety of the McCanns' two-year-old twins. The fact that the parents left all three of their children alone at their holiday apartment on the night Madeleine disappeared _____ the discussions. A local government official said a "lengthy assessment" would take place before deciding if the twins are "at risk". The couple continue to tell reporters that the claims they had _____ child's disappearance are "ludicrous".

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

media	circus

- 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 exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• disappearance• conducting• vanished• reopen• DNA• suspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ordeal• piled• alone• figure• lengthy• ludicrous
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STUDENT MYSTERY SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about MYSTERIES 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.

DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What do you know about the Madeleine McCann case?
- c) Why do you think the disappearance of this little girl has been reported on so much, while other children disappear every day and do not make any headlines?
- d) Do you think the world's media are obsessed with this case?
- e) Do you think the new evidence will bring a conclusion to the case any closer?
- f) What do you think of the fact that the parents have been named as suspects but were allowed to return to England?
- g) How newsworthy do you think this case is?
- h) Why do you think so few facts are known about Madeleine's disappearance?



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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think life would be like with reporters following you everywhere?
- c) Are there laws in your country that protect people from over-eager journalists and paparazzi?
- d) How do you think Madeleine's parents are coping with the world's media attention being on them?
- e) What do you think of the parents leaving their three infant children alone in a hotel room while they went to dinner?
- f) Do you really think British social workers will find the McCanns' twin babies are "at risk"?
- g) What questions would you like to ask the Portuguese police?
- h) What questions would you like to ask journalists about their obsession with this case?

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

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Madeleine McCann mystery deepens

The investigation (1) _____ the disappearance of the four-year-old British girl Madeleine McCann continued yesterday with new "evidence" from Portuguese police. Detectives told reporters that they will start (2) _____ new searches for the missing daughter of Gerry and Kate McCann. There will be a new search of the resort where the little girl mysteriously (3) _____ on the third of May. Investigators gave no further reasons why they will (4) _____ the hunt after calling off the official search a month ago. There are also new reports that blood found in the McCanns' hire car was a (5) _____ match to Madeleine's DNA. The public prosecutor in Portugal will now assess whether charges should be brought (6) _____ the couple. Earlier this week, the police formally stated that Madeleine's parents were suspects in the case.

Meanwhile, back in their home in England, the McCanns are trying to recover from the (7) _____ of being followed by a media circus for the past four months. They told reporters that they will return to Portugal to continue their own search for their daughter. However, more agony might be (8) _____ on them by social workers and police in Britain, who are meeting to discuss the safety of the McCanns' two-year-old twins. The (9) _____ that the parents left all three of their children alone at their holiday apartment on the night Madeleine disappeared will (10) _____ strongly in the discussions. A local government official said a "lengthy assessment" would (11) _____ place before deciding if the twins are "at risk". The couple continue to tell reporters that the claims they had anything to do with their child's disappearance are "(12) _____".

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) to | (b) unto | (c) onto | (d) into |
| 2. | (a) conductor | (b) conductive | (c) conducting | (d) prevail |
| 3. | (a) vanished | (b) varnished | (c) vanishes | (d) varnishes |
| 4. | (a) ripen | (b) reopen | (c) close | (d) ripe |
| 5. | (a) full up | (b) fullest | (c) fully | (d) full |
| 6. | (a) for | (b) against | (c) by | (d) with |
| 7. | (a) ordeal | (b) order | (c) ordering | (d) orderly |
| 8. | (a) pile | (b) piles | (c) piled | (d) piling |
| 9. | (a) fact | (b) farce | (c) factual | (d) fiction |
| 10. | (a) numeral | (b) number | (c) figure | (d) letter |
| 11. | (a) give | (b) take | (c) in | (d) out of |
| 12. | (a) fools | (b) madly | (c) ridicule | (d) ludicrous |

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

3. MEDIA POSTER: Make a poster showing different newspapers and television news channels in your country. Write a description of how they differ. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the quality of newspaper and TV journalism in your country. Include imaginary interviews with journalists.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the head of a TV news channel. Ask him/her three questions about the channel's policy on reporting the Madeleine McCann case. Give him/her three pieces of advice about how to provide clearer news, while avoiding sensationalism. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. disappearance | a. vanishing |
| 2. evidence | b. proof |
| 3. conducting | c. carrying out |
| 4. assess | d. evaluate |
| 5. formally | e. officially |
| 6. ordeal | f. nightmare |
| 7. agony | g. pain |
| 8. piled | h. heaped |
| 9. figure | i. play a part |
| 10. ludicrous | j. absurd |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. The investigation into the | a. disappearance of the four-year-old |
| 2. a new search of the resort where the | b. little girl mysteriously vanished |
| 3. they will reopen the hunt after | c. calling off the official search |
| 4. blood found in the McCanns' hire car | d. was a full match to Madeleine's |
| 5. police formally stated that | e. Madeleine's parents were suspects |
| 6. recover from the ordeal of being | f. followed by a media circus |
| 7. more agony might be | g. piled on them by social workers |
| 8. figure strongly | h. in the discussions |
| 9. a "lengthy assessment" | i. would take place |
| 10. before deciding if the twins | j. are "at risk" |

GAP FILL:

Madeleine McCann mystery deepens

The investigation **into** the disappearance of the four-year-old British girl Madeleine McCann continued yesterday with new "**evidence**" from Portuguese police. Detectives told reporters that they will start **conducting** new searches for the missing daughter of Gerry and Kate McCann. There will be a new search of the resort where the little girl mysteriously **vanished** on the third of May. Investigators gave no further reasons why they will reopen the hunt after calling **off** the official search a month ago. There are also new reports that blood found in the McCanns' hire car was a full **match** to Madeleine's DNA. The public prosecutor in Portugal will now assess whether charges should be brought **against** the couple. Earlier this week, the police formally stated that Madeleine's parents were **suspects** in the case.

Meanwhile, back in their home in England, the McCanns are trying to recover from the **ordeal** of being followed by a media **circus** for the past four months. They told reporters that they will return to Portugal to continue their own search for their daughter. However, more **agony** might be piled on them by social workers and police in Britain, who are meeting to discuss the **safety** of the McCanns' two-year-old twins. The fact that the parents left all three of their children alone at their holiday apartment on the night Madeleine disappeared will figure **strongly** in the discussions. A local government official said a "**lengthy** assessment" would take place before deciding if the twins are "at **risk**". The couple continue to tell reporters that the claims they had anything to do with their child's disappearance are "**ludicrous**".

LANGUAGE WORK

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