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Maradona breaks airport door in anger

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24 December, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Maradona breaks airport door in anger

The former Argentinian football star Diego Maradona has flown home to Buenos Aires following his arrest at Rio de Janeiro's international airport. Police detained the legendary soccer wizard after he broke down an airport door in the VIP lounge. He had been late for check-in. When ground staff told him he could not board the flight because it was ready for take-off, he became irate, flew into a rage and started to "destroy" whatever was in his vicinity. Police interrogated him for several hours and he was released after Argentine president Nestor Kirchner ordered diplomats in Brazil to intervene on his behalf. Former Argentine player and travel companion Alejandro Mancuso said Maradona's rage was "logical and spontaneous" because staff "shut the door in our faces".

Maradona has overcome cocaine and alcohol addiction since retiring from professional football in 1997, and has also had repeated gun related run-ins with the police. Mr. Mancuso denied suggestions appearing in the Brazilian press that Maradona's tantrum had been fueled by alcohol. He is widely acknowledged as being one of the best, if not the best, players of all time, helping his country capture the 1986 World Cup in Italy. He is revered and enjoys cult status in much of Latin America, where he counts presidents Castro of Cuba and Chavez of Venezuela as his close friends. He led protests against U.S. President George W. Bush at a regional summit in Argentina in November. Maradona has since resolved the fracas at the airport by offering to pay for the damage to the departure lounge door.

WARM-UPS

1. MARADONA SEARCH: Talk to as many other students as you can to find out what they know about Maradona. After you have talked to lots of students, sit down with your partner(s) and share your information. Tell each other what you thought was interesting or surprising. Would you like to meet Maradona?

2. AIRPORTS: What are the things you least like about airports and flying? Talk about the things below with your partner(s). How could they be improved?

- Checking in
- Passport control
- Airplane food
- In-flight facilities
- Departure lounges
- Airport shopping
- Boarding procedures
- Airport design

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

Diego Maradona / Rio de Janeiro / airports / wizards / VIP lounges / boarding flights / rage / spontaneity / cocaine / World Cup / cult status / Fidel Castro / Argentina

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

4. STAY CALM: In pairs / groups, put the following in order of the best thing to do to resolve a problem with a company employee. Is your order different from what you would do first (or second, third...)? Have you done any of the things below?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kick down a door | <input type="checkbox"/> Threaten to have the person fired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask to see the manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Smile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scream: "I'm a loyal customer." | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk away angry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glare at the person angrily | <input type="checkbox"/> Complain that the company is bad |

5. GETTING ANGRY: In pairs / groups, discuss how the situations below might make you angry. What are your experiences of getting angry in these situations?

- a. At airports or on airplanes
- b. Shopping
- c. Waiting in line to buy a ticket
- d. Taking the train
- e. Your favorite sports team loses
- f. Staying at a hotel
- g. Speaking English
- h. Being in another country

6. RAGE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "rage". 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. Maradona is in jail awaiting trial for vandalism at a Brazilian airport. T / F
- b. He flew into a rage after he was not allowed to board a flight. T / F
- c. The Argentine president intervened on his behalf. T / F
- d. Maradona's travel companion said the star's behavior was "illogical". T / F
- e. Maradona has overcome alcohol and substance abuse since retiring. T / F
- f. His travel companion said Maradona got angry because he was drunk. T / F
- g. Maradona counts Cuba's and Venezuela's presidents as his friends. T / F
- h. Maradona is refusing to pay for the results of the airport fracas. T / F

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

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. detained | furious |
| b. wizard | disturbance |
| c. irate | beat |
| d. vicinity | adored |
| e. intervene | altercations |
| f. overcome | held |
| g. run-ins | step in |
| h. tantrum | range |
| i. revered | magician |
| j. fracas | flare-up |

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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Police detained the legendary | whatever was in his vicinity |
| b. he became irate, | the 1986 World Cup |
| c. started to "destroy" | his behalf |
| d. intervene on | enjoys cult status |
| e. Mancuso said Maradona's rage | run-ins with the police |
| f. repeated gun related | soccer wizard |
| g. Maradona's tantrum had been | flew into a rage and... |
| h. helping his country capture | fracas at the airport |
| i. He is revered and | was logical and spontaneous |
| j. Maradona has since resolved the | fueled by alcohol |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Maradona breaks airport door in anger

The former Argentinian football star Diego Maradona has flown home to Buenos Aires following his arrest at Rio de Janeiro's international airport. Police detained the _____ soccer wizard after he broke down an airport door in the VIP lounge. He had been late for check-in. When ground staff told him he could not _____ the flight because it was ready for take-off, he became irate, _____ into a rage and started to "destroy" whatever was in his _____. Police interrogated him for several hours and he was released after Argentine president Nestor Kirchner ordered diplomats in Brazil to _____ on his _____. Former Argentine player and travel _____ Alejandro Mancuso said Maradona's rage was "_____ and spontaneous" because staff "shut the door in our faces".

Maradona has _____ cocaine and alcohol addiction since retiring from professional football in 1997, and has also had repeated gun related _____ with the police. Mr. Mancuso denied suggestions appearing in the Brazilian press that Maradona's _____ had been fueled by alcohol. He is widely _____ as being one of the best, if not the best, players of all time, helping his country _____ the 1986 World Cup in Italy. He is _____ and enjoys cult status in much of Latin America, where he _____ presidents Castro of Cuba and Chavez of Venezuela as his close friends. He led protests against U.S. President George W. Bush at a regional summit in Argentina in November. Maradona has since _____ the fracas at the airport by offering to pay for the damage to the departure lounge door.

intervene
flew
companion
legendary
vicinity
logical
behalf
board

revered
run-ins
acknowledged
resolved
overcome
counts
tantrum
capture

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Maradona breaks airport door in anger

The former Argentinian football star Diego Maradona has flown home to Buenos Aires _____ his arrest at Rio de Janeiro's international airport. Police _____ the legendary soccer wizard after he broke down an airport door in the VIP lounge. He had been late for check-in. When ground staff told him he could not board the flight because it was ready for take-off, he became _____, flew into a rage and started to "destroy" whatever was in his _____. Police interrogated him for several hours and he was released after Argentine president Nestor Kirchner ordered diplomats in Brazil to _____ on his behalf. Former Argentine player and travel companion Alejandro Mancuso said Maradona's rage was "logical and _____" because staff "shut the door in our faces".

Maradona has _____ cocaine and alcohol addiction since retiring from professional football in 1997, and has also had repeated gun related _____ with the police. Mr. Mancuso denied suggestions appearing in the Brazilian press that Maradona's _____ had been _____ by alcohol. He is widely acknowledged as being one of the best, if not the best, players of all time, helping his country capture the 1986 World Cup in Italy. He is _____ and enjoys cult status in much of Latin America, where he counts presidents Castro of Cuba and Chavez of Venezuela as his close friends. He _____ protests against U.S. President George W. Bush at a regional summit in Argentina in November. Maradona has since resolved the _____ at the airport by offering to pay for the damage to the departure lounge door.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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. STUDENT "ANGER" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about being angry and being at airports or other transport hubs.

- 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:

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| • following | • overcome |
| • wizard | • tantrum |
| • board | • capture |
| • vicinity | • counts |
| • behalf | • protests |
| • logical | • fracas |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you know about Diego Maradona – on and off the soccer field?
- c. Do you think the airport police should have detained Maradona for longer?
- d. Do you think it's right that Argentina's president intervened to get Maradona released from police detention?
- e. Do you think the airport staff should have let Maradona board the flight?
- f. Do you agree with Alejandro Mancuso that Maradona's behavior was "logical"?
- g. Do you think Maradona is or could be a role model?
- h. What question would you like to ask Maradona?
- i. What do you think his answer might be?
- j. Do you think Maradona is the greatest football player ever?

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 think there's one law for superstars and another law for ordinary people?
- d. Have you ever missed a flight?
- e. Do you get angry at airports?
- f. Have you ever been so angry that you attacked a door?
- g. Would you like to sometimes attack a door?
- h. Do you think Maradona will one day run to be president of Argentina?
- i. Which sports stars enjoy cult status in your country?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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?

SPEAKING

IRRITATING THINGS: In pairs / groups, talk about how angry the following situations might make you. Put one of these numbers in the appropriate boxes:

- 5 = Door-breaking angry
- 4 = Ranting and raving angry
- 3 = Fist-clenching angry
- 2 = Tut to myself angry
- 1 = Think, "Oh well, never mind" angry

a.	The person behind you in the supermarket runs his cart into the back of your ankles.	
b.	The elevator stops on every floor and nobody gets on.	
c.	There's a dog in the neighborhood that barks at EVERYTHING.	
d.	You can never put anything back in a box the way it came.	
e.	You wash a garment with a tissue in the pocket and your entire laundry comes out covered with white fluff.	
f.	The car in front of you is driving at 10 kph below the speed limit.	
g.	You set your alarm clock for 7pm instead of 7am.	
h.	The radio station doesn't tell you who sang that song.	
i.	You rub on hand cream and can't turn the bathroom doorknob to get out.	
j.	People behind you in a supermarket line dash ahead of you to a newly opening counter.	
k.	You can't look up the correct spelling of a word in the dictionary because you don't know how to spell it.	
l.	You have to inform five different sales people in the same store that you're just looking.	
m.	You had that pen in your hand only a second ago and now you can't find it.	
n.	You reach under the table to pick something off the floor and smash your head on the way up.	

Change partners and tell you new partner(s) the interesting or funny things your old partner(s) said.

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 Diego Maradona. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. ANGER: Write a short essay about an incident in your life that made you very, very angry. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. EYEWITNESS: Imagine you were in the VIP lounge when Maradona flew into a rage. Write an eyewitness account of what you saw. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. detained | held |
| b. wizard | magician |
| c. irate | furious |
| d. vicinity | range |
| e. intervene | step in |
| f. overcome | beat |
| g. run-ins | altercations |
| h. tantrum | flare-up |
| i. revered | adored |
| j. fracas | disturbance |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Police detained the legendary | soccer wizard |
| b. he became irate, | flew into a rage and... |
| c. started to "destroy" | whatever was in his vicinity |
| d. intervene on | his behalf |
| e. Mancuso said Maradona's rage | was logical and spontaneous |
| f. repeated gun related | run-ins with the police |
| g. Maradona's tantrum had been | fueled by alcohol |
| h. helping his country capture | the 1986 World Cup |
| i. He is revered and | enjoys cult status |
| j. Maradona has since resolved the | fracas at the airport |

GAP FILL:

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The former Argentinian football star Diego Maradona has flown home to Buenos Aires following his arrest at Rio de Janeiro's international airport. Police detained the **legendary** soccer wizard after he broke down an airport door in the VIP lounge. He had been late for check-in. When ground staff told him he could not **board** the flight because it was ready for take-off, he became irate, **flew** into a rage and started to "destroy" whatever was in his **vicinity**. Police interrogated him for several hours and he was released after Argentine president Nestor Kirchner ordered diplomats in Brazil to **intervene** on his **behalf**. Former Argentine player and travel **companion** Alejandro Mancuso said Maradona's rage was "**logical** and spontaneous" because staff "shut the door in our faces".

Maradona has **overcome** cocaine and alcohol addiction since retiring from professional football in 1997, and has also had repeated gun related **run-ins** with the police. Mr. Mancuso denied suggestions appearing in the Brazilian press that Maradona's **tantrum** had been fueled by alcohol. He is widely **acknowledged** as being one of the best, if not the best, players of all time, helping his country **capture** the 1986 World Cup in Italy. He is **revered** and enjoys cult status in much of Latin America, where he **counts** presidents Castro of Cuba and Chavez of Venezuela as his close friends. He led protests against U.S. President George W. Bush at a regional summit in Argentina in November. Maradona has since **resolved** the fracas at the airport by offering to pay for the damage to the departure lounge door.