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Spice Girls start world reunion tour

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2nd December, 2007

THE ARTICLE

The Spice Girls launch their comeback world tour in Vancouver this weekend after seven years out of the limelight. They hope to bring back “girl power” and introduce it to a whole new generation of teenagers. The five-member group was one of the hottest bands of the 1990s and sold a massive 55 million albums worldwide. They became instant heroes for millions of their fans with their songs, dance movements and street fashion. They also encouraged young women to be more self confident with their “girl power” message. Their debut single "Wannabe" was a smash hit in 1996 and was number one in the singles charts all over the world. They followed this with eight other number one records in the UK, which had many music writers and journalists comparing them to the Beatles.

There has been much hype surrounding the upcoming tour. More than 750,000 tickets have been sold so far and the band’s website says they’ll play additional concerts in Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Sydney. Each band member should make up to \$20 million from the tour and associated record sales. However, the girls were quick to tell the media that the reunion concerts were more about their fans than the cash. Geri Halliwell, who left the band in 1998, two years before it eventually split up, said: "For me it's about celebrating the past and enjoying each other; It's about our fans." One fan eagerly awaiting the Vancouver gig, 28-year-old Sherri Reeve claimed the concert was a dream come true. “The Spice Girls changed my life when I was a teenager. They are perfect role models,” she said.

WARM-UPS

1. BANDS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about pop and rock bands. 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.

spice / the limelight / generations / heroes / street fashion / self confidence / hype / concerts / the media / fans / celebrating the past / dreams / role models

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

3. TWO-MINUTE POP DEBATES: Have the following fun 2-minute debates. Students A strongly believe in the first argument, students B the second. Change pairs often.

- a. Pop music is total rubbish. Vs. Pop music is art.
- b. Rock music is 100 times better than pop music. Vs. Your maths are wrong.
- c. Pop stars have very little talent. Vs. Pop stars are multi-talented.
- d. You don't need a good voice to be a pop star. Vs. You need a great voice.
- e. Pop music is like a McDonalds hamburger. Vs. No. Fine French cuisine.
- f. Boy bands and girl bands suck. Vs. They're the best bands around.

4. POP STARS: With your partner(s), talk about which of these are necessary to be the perfect pop star. Rate them from 10 (= totally necessary) to 1 (= no need for this at all, whatsoever). Repeat this activity for rock stars and opera singers.

- ___ a beautiful/attractive face and body
- ___ the ability to write one's own songs and music
- ___ the ability to play a musical instrument very well
- ___ nice teeth
- ___ a knowledge of musical scores and how to read music
- ___ fantastic at dancing
- ___ a brain
- ___ a good sense of fashion

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

6. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A is a famous pop star who retired ten years ago and is still fed up with music; Student B is a long-time fan of Student A who wants him/her to make a comeback. Role play their conversation. Change partners often. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. A pop band will play again after a five-year absence from touring. | T / F |
| b. The band members were all very powerful girls as teenagers. | T / F |
| c. The bands global record sales topped 55 million. | T / F |
| d. The Beatles said they were very similar to the all-girl band. | T / F |
| e. Over three quarters of a million tickets have been sold for the tour. | T / F |
| f. Extra dates have been added on four different continents. | T / F |
| g. The band members are touring because they need the money. | T / F |
| h. One fan said the band members should all go into modeling. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. launch | a. publicity |
| 2. limelight | b. motivated |
| 3. whole | c. centre stage |
| 4. instant | d. finally |
| 5. encouraged | e. commence |
| 6. hype | f. immediate |
| 7. additional | g. related |
| 8. associated | h. keenly |
| 9. eventually | i. completely |
| 10. eagerly | j. extra |

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

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The Spice Girls launch their | a. of teenagers |
| 2. seven years out | b. the past |
| 3. a whole new generation | c. them to the Beatles |
| 4. encouraged young women | d. the upcoming tour |
| 5. music writers and journalists comparing | e. up to \$20 million |
| 6. There has been much hype surrounding | f. comeback world tour |
| 7. the band's website says they'll play | g. of the limelight |
| 8. Each band member should make | h. come true |
| 9. For me it's about celebrating | i. to be more self confident |
| 10. the concert was a dream | j. additional concerts |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

The Spice Girls _____ their comeback world tour in Vancouver this weekend after seven years out of the limelight. They hope to bring back “girl power” and _____ it to a whole new _____ of teenagers. The five-member group was one of the hottest bands of the 1990s and sold a _____ 55 million albums worldwide. They became _____ heroes for millions of their fans with their songs, dance movements and street fashion. They also encouraged young women to be more self confident with their “girl power” _____. Their debut single "Wannabe" was a smash hit in 1996 and was number one in the singles charts all over the world. They _____ this with eight other number one records in the UK, which had many music writers and journalists _____ them to the Beatles.

followed

introduce

message

massive

launch

comparing

generation

instant

There has been _____ hype surrounding the upcoming tour. More than 750,000 tickets have been sold so _____ and the band’s website says they’ll _____ additional concerts in Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Sydney. Each band member should _____ up to \$20 million from the tour and associated record sales. However, the girls were quick to tell the media that the reunion concerts were more about their fans than the _____. Geri Halliwell, who left the band in 1998, two years before it eventually _____ up, said: "For me it's about celebrating the past and enjoying each other; It's about our fans." One fan _____ awaiting the Vancouver gig, 28-year-old Sherri Reeve claimed the concert was a dream come true. "The Spice Girls changed my life when I was a teenager. They are perfect _____ models," she said.

cash

role

far

make

split

much

eagerly

play

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The Spice Girls launch their comeback world tour in Vancouver this weekend _____ the limelight. They hope to bring back "girl power" and introduce it _____ of teenagers. The five-member group was one of the hottest bands of the 1990s and sold a massive 55 million albums worldwide. They _____ millions of their fans with their songs, dance movements and street fashion. They also encouraged young women _____ with their "girl power" message. Their debut single "Wannabe" was a smash hit in 1996 and was number one in the singles charts all over the world. They followed this with _____ records in the UK, which had many music writers and journalists _____ Beatles.

There _____ surrounding the upcoming tour. More than 750,000 tickets have been sold so far and the band's website says _____ concerts in Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Sydney. Each band member should make up to \$20 million _____ record sales. However, the girls were quick to tell the media that the reunion concerts were more about _____. Geri Halliwell, who left the band in 1998, two years before it eventually split up, said: "For me it's about celebrating the past and enjoying each other; It's about our fans." _____ the Vancouver gig, 28-year-old Sherri Reeve claimed the concert was a dream come true. "The Spice Girls changed my life when I was a teenager. They _____," she said.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

spice	girl
--------------	-------------

- 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"> • launch • generation • instant • message • smash • comparing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surrounding • additional • associated • split up • eagerly • perfect
--	---

STUDENT POP STAR SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about pop stars 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 think about the Spice Girls and their music?
 - c) Would you like to go to one of the concerts?
 - d) Do you think "girl power" is a good thing?
 - e) Would you like your daughter to be like a Spice Girl?
 - f) Do you think the Spice Girls should also have encouraged "boy power"?
 - g) Who are your musical heroes, and why?
 - h) Do you think the dance moves and fashion of pop stars are important?
 - i) Do you think the Spice Girls are as important as the Beatles?
-

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Have you seen or read about the hype surrounding the Spice Girls tour?
- c) Do you think \$20 million for each Spice Girl is a fair amount of money to earn for a few weeks work?
- d) Do you think the tour is really about the fans or more about the \$20 million?
- e) If the tour was about the fans, don't you think they should donate most of their earnings to charity?
- f) Which band or singer would you love to see in concert?
- g) Has any pop singer or band changed your life?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the Spice Girls?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

LANGUAGE

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

The Spice Girls (1) _____ their comeback world tour in Vancouver this weekend after seven years out of the limelight. They hope to bring back “girl power” and introduce it to a (2) _____ new generation of teenagers. The five-member group was one of the hottest bands of the 1990s and sold a (3) _____ 55 million albums worldwide. They became (4) _____ heroes for millions of their fans with their songs, dance movements and street fashion. They also encouraged young women to be more self confident with their “girl power” message. Their (5) _____ single "Wannabe" was a smash hit in 1996 and was number one in the singles charts all over the world. They followed this with eight other number one records in the UK, which had many music writers and journalists comparing them (6) _____ the Beatles.

There has been (7) _____ hype surrounding the upcoming tour. More than 750,000 tickets have been sold so (8) _____ and the band’s website says they’ll play additional concerts in Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Sydney. Each band member should make (9) _____ to \$20 million from the tour and associated record sales. However, the girls were quick to tell the media that the reunion concerts were more about their (10) _____ than the cash. Geri Halliwell, who left the band in 1998, two years before it eventually split (11) _____, said: "For me it's about celebrating the past and enjoying each other; It's about our fans." One fan eagerly awaiting the Vancouver gig, 28-year-old Sherri Reeve claimed the concert was a dream (12) _____ true. “The Spice Girls changed my life when I was a teenager. They are perfect role models,” she said.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) launches | (b) launcher | (c) launching | (d) launch |
| 2. | (a) all | (b) entire | (c) whole | (d) full |
| 3. | (a) massive | (b) big | (c) large | (d) lots |
| 4. | (a) soon | (b) instant | (c) now | (d) quickly |
| 5. | (a) debut | (b) debutant | (c) debuts | (d) debuted |
| 6. | (a) of | (b) for | (c) to | (d) by |
| 7. | (a) many | (b) much | (c) any | (d) most |
| 8. | (a) with | (b) for | (c) by | (d) far |
| 9. | (a) on | (b) in | (c) down | (d) up |
| 10. | (a) fans | (b) fan | (c) fanning | (d) fanatical |
| 11. | (a) in | (b) into | (c) up | (d) with |
| 12. | (a) comes | (b) come | (c) came | (d) coming |

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 the Spice Girls and their tour. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. POP BANDS: Make a poster about different pop bands around the world. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all include similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about a day in the life of one of the Spice Girls. Include imaginary interviews with a Spice Girl and a fan.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to one the Spice Girls. Give her three suggestions on what she and her band can really do to give power to girls. Give three reasons why she should give most of her \$20 million to girls' charities. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. launch | a. commence |
| 2. limelight | b. centre stage |
| 3. whole | c. completely |
| 4. instant | d. immediate |
| 5. encouraged | e. motivated |
| 6. hype | f. publicity |
| 7. additional | g. extra |
| 8. associated | h. related |
| 9. eventually | i. finally |
| 10. eagerly | j. keenly |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The Spice Girls launch their | a. comeback world tour |
| 2. seven years out | b. of the limelight |
| 3. a whole new generation | c. of teenagers |
| 4. encouraged young women | d. to be more self confident |
| 5. music writers and journalists comparing | e. them to the Beatles |
| 6. There has been much hype surrounding | f. the upcoming tour |
| 7. the band's website says they'll play | g. additional concerts |
| 8. Each band member should make | h. up to \$20 million |
| 9. For me it's about celebrating | i. the past |
| 10. the concert was a dream | j. come true |

GAP FILL:

Spice Girls start world reunion tour

The Spice Girls **launch** their comeback world tour in Vancouver this weekend after seven years out of the limelight. They hope to bring back "girl power" and **introduce** it to a whole new **generation** of teenagers. The five-member group was one of the hottest bands of the 1990s and sold a **massive** 55 million albums worldwide. They became **instant** heroes for millions of their fans with their songs, dance movements and street fashion. They also encouraged young women to be more self confident with their "girl power" **message**. Their debut single "Wannabe" was a smash hit in 1996 and was number one in the singles charts all over the world. They **followed** this with eight other number one records in the UK, which had many music writers and journalists **comparing** them to the Beatles.

There has been **much** hype surrounding the upcoming tour. More than 750,000 tickets have been sold so **far** and the band's website says they'll **play** additional concerts in Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Sydney. Each band member should **make** up to \$20 million from the tour and associated record sales. However, the girls were quick to tell the media that the reunion concerts were more about their fans than the **cash**. Geri Halliwell, who left the band in 1998, two years before it eventually **split** up, said: "For me it's about celebrating the past and enjoying each other; It's about our fans." One fan **eagerly** awaiting the Vancouver gig, 28-year-old Sherri Reeve claimed the concert was a dream come true. "The Spice Girls changed my life when I was a teenager. They are perfect **role** models," she said.

LANGUAGE WORK

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