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'Witch' link denies JK Rowling top US award

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

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1st October, 2009

THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

Harry Potter author JK Rowling missed out on getting a top American honour because US politicians believed she had a link to witchcraft. Matt Latimer, a top speech writer for George W. Bush, has said in a new book that the world famous author was rejected for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest award given to any civilian in the USA. It recognizes people who have added a lot to world culture. The claims that Rowling was snubbed are in Mr. Latimer's new book, called 'Speechless: Tales of a White House Survivor'. In it, he criticizes top US officials for their "narrow thinking", that led to a decision not to honour JK Rowling. The Bush administration also decided not to award the medal to Senator Edward Kennedy, who died in August, 2009.

JK Rowling is the best selling author in the world. She has sold over 400 million books and has won numerous awards for her writing. She has a following of perhaps a billion fans worldwide. Her personal fortune is estimated to be around \$800 million. Before she struck upon the idea for Harry Potter, Rowling was a struggling teacher. She taught students in Portugal to learn English. Her life changed overnight with the success of her first novel. The recent news that George W. Bush officials believed Harry Potter encouraged witchcraft is not the first time she has upset American conservatives. In 2007, Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly attacked her for saying that the Harry Potter character Dumbledore was gay. He said she was trying to play with the minds of U.S. kids.

WARM-UPS

1. HARRY POTTER: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Harry Potter. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

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

witches / top honours / world culture / new books / speechless / narrow thinking / best selling authors / fortunes / things changing overnight / success / mind games

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

3. MY AWARDS: What awards should you get right now? Complete this table. Talk about what you wrote with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you heard.

	What kind of award	Why I got it
English		
Friendship		
Original ideas		
Son / Daughter		
Hobby		
Helping		

4. J.K. ROWLING: Students A **strongly** believe J.K. Rowling is one of the most important writers ever; Students B **strongly** believe she's just average. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. AND THE WINNER IS...: Who would you give a prize to? Talk about these with your partner(s).

- for English
- for teaching
- a world leader
- a movie star
- for technology
- for caring
- for a great idea
- for being extra special

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

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Top U.S. officials believed J.K. Rowling was connected to witchcraft. | T / F |
| b. George W. Bush called J.K. Rowling a witch in a new book. | T / F |
| c. A top speech writer lost his voice because Rowling did not win a prize. | T / F |
| d. The speech writer said U.S. officials weren't so broad-minded. | T / F |
| e. Nobody is selling as many books as J.K. Rowling at the moment. | T / F |
| f. It is estimated that J.K. Rowling has about 100,000,000 fans. | T / F |
| g. J.K. Rowling used to be an English teacher in Europe. | T / F |
| h. A U.S. news anchor was angry after Rowling said Harry Potter was gay. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. honour | a. lost for words |
| 2. link | b. give |
| 3. snubbed | c. promoted |
| 4. speechless | d. guessed |
| 5. award | e. wealth |
| 6. numerous | f. connection |
| 7. fortune | g. angered |
| 8. estimated | h. ignored |
| 9. encouraged | i. privilege |
| 10. upset | j. many |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. missed out on getting a | a. teacher |
| 2. she had a link | b. overnight |
| 3. the world famous author | c. thinking |
| 4. narrow | d. author in the world |
| 5. ...that led to a decision not | e. top American honour |
| 6. the best selling | f. minds of U.S. kids |
| 7. She has a following of perhaps | g. to witchcraft |
| 8. Rowling was a struggling | h. to honour JK Rowling |
| 9. Her life changed | i. a billion fans |
| 10. trying to play with the | j. was rejected |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

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

Harry Potter author JK Rowling _____ out on getting a top American honour because US politicians believed she had a _____ to witchcraft. Matt Latimer, a top speech writer for George W. Bush, has said in a new book that the world famous author was _____ for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest award given to any _____ in the USA. It recognizes people who have added a lot to world culture. The claims that Rowling was _____ are in Mr. Latimer's new book, called 'Speechless: Tales of a White House Survivor'. In it, he _____ top US officials for their "_____ thinking", that led to a decision not to honour JK Rowling. The Bush administration also decided not to _____ the medal to Senator Edward Kennedy, who died in August, 2009.

criticizes

link

award

rejected

missed

snubbed

narrow

civilian

JK Rowling is the best selling author in the world. She has sold over 400 million books and has won _____ awards for her writing. She has a following of perhaps a billion fans worldwide. Her _____ fortune is estimated to be around \$800 million. Before she _____ upon the idea for Harry Potter, Rowling was a _____ teacher. She taught students in Portugal to learn English. Her life changed _____ with the success of her first novel. The recent news that George W. Bush officials believed Harry Potter encouraged witchcraft is not the first time she has _____ American conservatives. In 2007, Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly attacked her for saying that the Harry Potter character Dumbledore was gay. He said she was trying to _____ with the _____ of U.S. kids.

struck

numerous

upset

play

struggling

minds

personal

overnight

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

Harry Potter author JK Rowling _____ getting a top American honour because US politicians believed she _____ witchcraft. Matt Latimer, a top speech writer for George W. Bush, has said in a new book that the world famous author was _____ Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest award _____ civilian in the USA. It recognizes people who have added a lot to world culture. The claims that Rowling _____ in Mr. Latimer's new book, called 'Speechless: Tales of a White House Survivor'. In it, he criticizes top US officials for their "narrow thinking", that _____ not to honour JK Rowling. The Bush administration also decided not to award the medal to Senator Edward Kennedy, who died in August, 2009.

JK Rowling is the best selling author in the world. She has sold over 400 million books and has _____ for her writing. She has a following of perhaps a billion fans worldwide. Her _____ estimated to be around \$800 million. Before _____ the idea for Harry Potter, Rowling was a struggling teacher. She taught students in Portugal to learn English. Her life changed overnight _____ her first novel. The recent news that George W. Bush officials believed Harry Potter encouraged witchcraft is not the first _____ American conservatives. In 2007, Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly attacked her for saying that the Harry Potter character Dumbledore was gay. He said she was trying to play _____ U.S. kids.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'witch' and 'craft'.

witch	craft
--------------	--------------

- 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 how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• missed• speech• highest• snubbed• narrow• died	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• best• numerous• personal• success• upset• minds
---	--

STUDENT HARRY POTTER SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

Write five GOOD questions about Harry Potter 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.

‘Witch’ link denies JK Rowling top US award – *1st October, 2009*

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HARRY POTTER DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'witch'?
- c) What do you think about this story?
- d) Do you think JK Rowling should get such an important medal?
- e) Are you surprised George W. Bush's advisors believed Harry Potter encouraged witchcraft?
- f) Would you like to read Matt Latimer's book?
- g) What medals, awards and prizes have you won?
- h) What is witchcraft?
- i) Do you think George W. Bush's administration was ever narrow minded?
- j) What has JK Rowling added to world culture?

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HARRY POTTER DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think of Harry Potter?
- c) Do you think reading Harry Potter will make kids turn to witchcraft?
- d) Would you like to be able to do magic?
- e) Why do you think Harry Potter is so popular?
- f) What kind of novel would you like to write?
- g) How big is Harry Potter in your country?
- h) Do you have any favourite Harry Potter books or characters?
- i) What do you think of the fact that JK Rowling said Dumbledore was gay?
- j) What questions would you like to ask JK Rowling?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

Harry Potter author JK Rowling missed (1) ____ on getting a top American honour because US politicians believed she had a link to witchcraft. Matt Latimer, a top (2) ____ writer for George W. Bush, has said in a new book that the world famous author was (3) ____ for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest award given to any civilian in the USA. It recognizes people who have added a lot to world culture. The claims that Rowling was (4) ____ are in Mr. Latimer's new book, called 'Speechless: Tales of a White House Survivor'. In it, he criticizes top US officials for their "narrow (5) ____", that led to a decision not to honour JK Rowling. The Bush administration also decided not to (6) ____ the medal to Senator Edward Kennedy, who died in August, 2009.

JK Rowling is the (7) ____ selling author in the world. She has sold over 400 million books and has won numerous awards for her writing. She has a (8) ____ of perhaps a billion fans worldwide. Her personal fortune is estimated to be around \$800 million. Before she (9) ____ upon the idea for Harry Potter, Rowling was a struggling teacher. She taught students in Portugal to learn English. Her life changed overnight (10) ____ the success of her first novel. The recent news that George W. Bush officials believed Harry Potter encouraged witchcraft is not the first time she has (11) ____ American conservatives. In 2007, Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly attacked her for saying that the Harry Potter character Dumbledore was gay. He said she was trying to play with the (12) ____ of U.S. kids.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) in | (b) off | (c) up | (d) out |
| 2. | (a) speech | (b) speak | (c) spoken | (d) speaking |
| 3. | (a) injected | (b) rejected | (c) ejected | (d) dejected |
| 4. | (a) snobby | (b) snipped | (c) snubbed | (d) snapped |
| 5. | (a) thoughtful | (b) think | (c) thinking | (d) thinker |
| 6. | (a) prize | (b) award | (c) medal | (d) honour |
| 7. | (a) most | (b) fast | (c) must | (d) best |
| 8. | (a) following | (b) follows | (c) followers | (d) followed |
| 9. | (a) sucked | (b) struck | (c) socked | (d) smacked |
| 10. | (a) in | (b) over | (c) as | (d) with |
| 11. | (a) upped | (b) upper | (c) upset | (d) uptight |
| 12. | (a) minds | (b) eyebrows | (c) ankles | (d) shoulders |

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WRITING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091001-jk_rowling.html

Write about **Harry Potter** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

[illegible]

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 out more about Harry Potter. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. HARRY POTTER: Make a poster about Harry Potter. Include your favourite characters. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. WITCH: Write a magazine article about why JK Rowling did not win the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Include imaginary interviews with JK Rowling and a senior Bush advisor (who said she was linked to witchcraft).

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to JK Rowling. Ask her three questions about Harry Potter. Give her three suggestions for the story of a new Harry Potter book. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. honour | a. privilege |
| 2. link | b. connection |
| 3. snubbed | c. ignored |
| 4. speechless | d. lost for words |
| 5. award | e. give |
| 6. numerous | f. many |
| 7. fortune | g. wealth |
| 8. estimated | h. guessed |
| 9. encouraged | i. promoted |
| 10. upset | j. angered |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. missed out on getting a | a. top American honour |
| 2. she had a link | b. to witchcraft |
| 3. the world famous author | c. was rejected |
| 4. narrow | d. thinking |
| 5. ...that led to a decision not | e. to honour JK Rowling |
| 6. the best selling | f. author in the world |
| 7. She has a following of perhaps | g. a billion fans |
| 8. Rowling was a struggling | h. teacher |
| 9. Her life changed | i. overnight |
| 10. trying to play with the | j. minds of U.S. kids |

GAP FILL:

"Witch" link denies JK Rowling top US award

Harry Potter author JK Rowling **missed** out on getting a top American honour because US politicians believed she had a **link** to witchcraft. Matt Latimer, a top speech writer for George W. Bush, has said in a new book that the world famous author was **rejected** for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest award given to any **civilian** in the USA. It recognizes people who have added a lot to world culture. The claims that Rowling was **snubbed** are in Mr. Latimer's new book, called 'Speechless: Tales of a White House Survivor'. In it, he **criticizes** top US officials for their "**narrow** thinking", that led to a decision not to honour JK Rowling. The Bush administration also decided not to **award** the medal to Senator Edward Kennedy, who died in August, 2009.

JK Rowling is the best selling author in the world. She has sold over 400 million books and has won **numerous** awards for her writing. She has a following of perhaps a billion fans worldwide. Her **personal** fortune is estimated to be around \$800 million. Before she **struck** upon the idea for Harry Potter, Rowling was a **struggling** teacher. She taught students in Portugal to learn English. Her life changed **overnight** with the success of her first novel. The recent news that George W. Bush officials believed Harry Potter encouraged witchcraft is not the first time she has **upset** American conservatives. In 2007, Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly attacked her for saying that the Harry Potter character Dumbledore was gay. He said she was trying to **play** with the **minds** of U.S. kids.

LANGUAGE WORK

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

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