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Ready-to-use ESL/EFL Lessons

## **Eiffel Tower parachutist dies**

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**18 May, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Eiffel Tower parachutist dies**

**BNE:** A 31-year-old Norwegian man has died in a failed bid to parachute from the Eiffel Tower in Paris. He was apparently attempting to film the jump as a publicity stunt for a Norwegian clothing brand. He had managed to smuggle his parachute and a helmet fitted with a tiny video camera past the security check at the Parisian landmark.

The jump from the 115-metre-high second level did not go according to plan. An unnamed police source said the man's parachute became snared on the monument and detached from him as he leapt off. He died instantly on impact when he hit the frame of the first level of the tower's structure.

The 324-metre-high Eiffel Tower, one of the world's most visited tourist attractions, attracts over six million visitors a year. Hundreds of people have leapt to their deaths before, usually to commit suicide. The first parachute death was Austrian daredevil Franz Reichelt, who, in 1912, tried to test his novel invention - the "parachute coat".

## WARM-UPS

**1. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics you are interested in, which do not look interesting and which look really boring:

*Norwegians / parachuting / Eiffel Tower / Paris / publicity stunts / clothing brands / tourist attractions / parachute coats / bungee jumping*

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

**2. PARIS:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Paris. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**3. OPINIONS:** With a partner, talk about whether you agree or disagree with these opinions.

- a. Anyone who tries to parachute from the Eiffel Tower is totally crazy.
- b. The Eiffel Tower management knows it is a popular place from which to jump – there should be much tighter security.
- c. The Norwegian clothing brand should be charged with manslaughter.
- d. They should now install some kind of safety net on the Eiffel Tower to stop maniacs from jumping.
- e. The Norwegian government should pay compensation to the Eiffel Tower.
- f. I can't think of a worse way to die.
- g. Publicity stunts like this should be made into a criminal offence.
- h. Daredevils like this man should think of the people who have to clear up the mess afterwards.
- i. Given the chance, I'd love to try a parachute jump from the Eiffel Tower – right from the top.
- j. Parachuting from the Eiffel Tower is an old idea. It's not such an original publicity stunt.

**4. X-SPORTS:** Parachuting from buildings is called base jumping. It is an X-sport, the abbreviated form of "extreme sport". "Extreme" may mean "extremely dangerous" or "extremely crazy". Have you tried any extreme sports? Would you like to? Talk about this list of extreme sports with your partner:

Bungee jumping

Elevator surfing (standing on top of elevators as they go up and down)

Whitewater kayaking

Surfing

Skateboarding

Base jumping

Skydiving

Snowboarding

Rock climbing

Mountain biking

Caving

## 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 parachutist died when he landed on top of the Eiffel Tower.      | T / F |
| b. A man died in a failed parachute jump from the Eiffel Tower.       | T / F |
| c. The jump was an unauthorized publicity stunt for a clothing brand. | T / F |
| d. The man had forgotten to put his parachute on and jumped.          | T / F |
| e. The man died shortly after being taken to a Parisian hospital.     | T / F |
| f. The Eiffel Tower is the world's most visited sight.                | T / F |
| g. Hundreds of people have committed suicide from the Eiffel Tower.   | T / F |
| h. Someone once tested a "parachute coat" from the Eiffel Tower.      | T / F |

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

- |                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| a. bid                          | went awry  |
| b. stunt                        | plunge     |
| c. smuggle                      | draws      |
| d. jump                         | sneak      |
| e. snared                       | unhitched  |
| f. did not go according to plan | attempt    |
| g. detached                     | lunatic    |
| h. attracts                     | entangled  |
| i. daredevil                    | innovative |
| j. novel                        | caper      |

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

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. failed            | police source               |
| b. He was apparently | tourist attractions         |
| c. publicity         | attempting to film the jump |
| d. did not go        | suicide                     |
| e. unnamed           | attempt                     |
| f. He died instantly | to their deaths             |
| g. most visited      | invention                   |
| h. leapt             | according to plan           |
| i. commit            | stunt                       |
| j. novel             | on impact                   |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**SENTENCE ORDER:** Complete the following paragraphs by choosing the correct sentences from the list below. Each paragraph needs two more sentences.

### Paragraph 1

**BNE:** A 31-year-old Norwegian man has died in a failed bid to parachute from the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

a)

b)

### Paragraph 2

The jump from the Eiffel Tower's 115-metre-high second level did not go according to plan.

a)

b)

### Paragraph 3

The 324-metre-high Eiffel Tower, one of the world's most visited tourist attractions, attracts over six million visitors a year.

a)

b)

An unnamed police source said the man's parachute became snared on the monument and detached from him as he leapt off.

He died instantly on impact when he hit the frame of the first level of the tower's structure.

The first parachute death was Austrian daredevil Franz Reichelt, who, in 1912, tried to test his novel invention - the "parachute coat".

He had managed to smuggle his parachute and a helmet fitted with a tiny video camera past the security check at the Parisian landmark.

He was apparently attempting to film the jump as a publicity stunt for a Norwegian clothing brand.

Hundreds of people have leapt to their deaths before, usually to commit suicide.

## AFTER READING

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

- 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. SENTENCE ORDER:** In pairs / groups, compare and talk about your answers to this exercise. After you agree, check your answers against the text.

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT PHOBIAS SURVEY:** In pairs / groups write down questions about phobias (such as a fear of heights, etc).

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make a mini-presentation to another group / the class 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:

failed  
brand  
helmet  
plan  
snared

impact  
frame  
attractions  
suicide  
novel

## LANGUAGE

### NATIONALITIES:

The man who died at the Eiffel Tower was Norwegian. Fill in the table of nationality words below. Check in a dictionary or on the Internet.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Adjective</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Nation</b>
Norway	Norwegian	Norwegian	the Norwegians
Afghanistan			
Egypt			
Greece			
Iceland			
Iraq			
Israel			
Peru			
Poland			
Sudan			
Thailand			
Turkey			
(My country)			

After you have finished, write down five questions using the nationality words of your own country. Ask other students your questions. Sit with a new partner and tell them about what you were told by other students.

## **DISCUSSION**

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

- a. What did you think when you saw the headline of this article?
- b. Do you like reading about strange news?
- c. What do you think of the man who tried to parachute from the Eiffel Tower?
- d. Do you think the Norwegian clothing manufacturer should be liable for his death in any way?
- e. Do you have a head for heights?
- f. Have you ever tried or would you like to try parachuting?
- g. What is the most dangerous thing you've ever done?
- h. Are there any extreme sports you'd like to try?
- i. Would you give elevator surfing a go?
- j. What do you do for an adrenalin rush?

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

- a. Did you like reading the article?
- b. What word would you use to describe the parachutist?
- c. Is there a daredevil in you?
- d. Do you know of any other crazy publicity stunts?
- e. Would you ever do anything crazy to launch a new company or make your company famous?
- f. What do you think of elevator surfing
- g. Would you consider buying a parachute coat?
- h. Would you consider testing a parachute coat?
- i. What is the most famous landmark in the world?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?



## SPEAKING

**PUBLICITY STUNTS:** You are members of a marketing team for a new company. You are 100 per cent convinced that your company will be an international success. You are sure it will make millions of dollars. All it needs is a little publicity. Your job is to think of the publicity stunt that will give your company worldwide attention. The crazier, the better. In pairs / groups decide on the following:

Name of the company	
Product	
Product name	
Advertising slogan	
The publicity stunt	
Location	
Equipment needed	
Illegal?	
Dangers	
Impact on people	
Newspapers and TV	
Who will do it?	

After you have finished, show your ideas to other students and give each other feedback. Suggest changes in each other's ideas that might make the publicity stunt more effective.

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Eiffel Tower parachutist dies**

**BNE:** A 31-year-old Norwegian man has died \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to parachute from the Eiffel Tower in Paris. He was  
\_\_\_\_\_ the jump as a publicity  
stunt for a Norwegian clothing brand. He had managed to  
smuggle his parachute and a helmet fitted with a tiny video  
camera \_\_\_\_\_ at the Parisian landmark.

The jump from the 115-metre-high second level did not  
\_\_\_\_\_. An unnamed police source said the  
man's parachute became snared on the monument and  
\_\_\_\_\_ as he leapt off. He died  
\_\_\_\_\_ when he hit the frame of the first  
level of the tower's structure.

The 324-metre-high Eiffel Tower, one of the world's most  
visited tourist attractions, \_\_\_\_\_ visitors  
a year. Hundreds of people have \_\_\_\_\_  
before, usually to commit suicide. The first parachute death  
was Austrian daredevil Franz Reichelt, who, in 1912, tried to  
test his novel invention - the "parachute coat".

## **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 information on the Eiffel Tower. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. LANDMARK:** Choose your favorite world landmark. Make a tourist poster for it so that people will want to come to visit. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson.

**4. REPORTER:** Imagine you were a reporter at the Eiffel Tower. Write your report for this evening's newspaper. Describe what you saw and include other eyewitness accounts in your story.

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. bid	attempt
b. stunt	caper
c. smuggle	sneak
d. jump	plunge
e. snared	entangled
f. did not go according to plan	went awry
g. detached	unhitched
h. attracts	draws
i. daredevil	lunatic
j. novel	innovative

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. failed	attempt
b. He was apparently	attempting to film the jump
c. publicity	stunt
d. did not go	according to plan
e. unnamed	police source
f. He died instantly	on impact
g. most visited	tourist attractions
h. leapt	to their deaths
i. commit	suicide
j. novel	invention

### NATIONALITIES:

<b>Country</b>	<b>Adjective</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Nation</b>
Afghanistan	Afghan	an Afghan	the Afghans
Egypt	Egyptian	an Egyptian	the Egyptians
Greece	Greek	a Greek	the Greeks
Iceland	Icelandic	an Icelander	the Icelanders
Iraq	Iraqi	an Iraqi	the Iraqis
Israel	Israeli	an Israeli	the Israelis
Peru	Peruvian	a Peruvian	the Peruvians
Poland	Polish	a Pole	the Poles
Sudan	Sudanese	a Sudanese	the Sudanese
Thailand	Thai	a Thai	the Thais
Turkey	Turkish	a Turk	the Turks