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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **Landmine elephant gets new foot**

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**30 August, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Landmine elephant gets new foot**

**BNE:** A Thai elephant who lost a foot after stepping on a landmine has been given a new one. She can now stop limping on three feet. Motala, 44, hit the world's headlines in 1999 when a landmine ripped off her front left foot. She was working at a logging camp on the Thai-Myanmar border. Veterinarians removed her foot and the surgery left her with one leg shorter than the others. For the past six years, Motala has been cared for at an elephant hospital. A staff member reports she is a model patient.

The new temporary foot is a sawdust-filled canvas boot. Vets plan to give Motala time to adjust to her new limb. She will initially wear it for just a few hours a day. This will allow her to get used to walking on all fours again. So far, her vets are delighted she has not rejected the foot. After eight months, the muscles in her leg should have totally recovered for her to walk normally. She will then be fitted with a stronger limb made from silicone and fiberglass.

## WARM-UPS

**1. I'M AN ELEPHANT:** You are now an elephant. Walk around the class and talk with the other "elephants" in your group. What is your life like? What are your biggest worries at the moment? What are your dreams?

**2. LOSS:** In pairs / groups, talk about what your life would be like if you lost any of the following.

- A foot
- A leg
- An eye
- Your hearing
- Your sight
- An arm
- Both arms
- Your hair

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

*Thailand / elephants / world headlines / landmines / surgery / animal hospitals / being a patient / boots / being delighted / muscles / silicone / fiberglass*

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

**4. ELEPHANT:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with elephants. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. SENTENCE STARTERS:** Complete the following sentences to make opinions based on the news article. Share and talk about your opinions with your partner(s):

- a. Elephants are \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Landmines are \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Logging is \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. Landmine victims should \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. Working elephants \_\_\_\_\_.
- f. Losing a limb \_\_\_\_\_.

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think elephants should never be used as working animals. Students B think it's OK to use elephants for some kinds of work. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. An elephant lost a foot after it stepped on a landmine.     | T / F |
| b. The elephant hit the headlines in 1999.                     | T / F |
| c. Veterinarians removed her foot.                             | T / F |
| d. The elephant was a bad patient while in hospital.           | T / F |
| e. The new temporary foot is a rice-filled canvas boot.        | T / F |
| f. The elephant must wear the new foot all day.                | T / F |
| g. Vets are delighted the elephant has not rejected the foot.  | T / F |
| h. The elephant will get a new foot made from wood and rubber. | T / F |

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

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| a. stepping  | happy         |
| b. limping   | tore          |
| c. ripped    | perfect       |
| d. removed   | foot          |
| e. model     | treading      |
| f. vets      | fully         |
| g. limb      | amputated     |
| h. delighted | sturdier      |
| i. totally   | hobbling      |
| j. stronger  | veterinarians |

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

- |                                      |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. lost a foot after                 | shorter than the others      |
| b. She can now stop limping          | have totally recovered       |
| c. hit the world's                   | a sawdust-filled canvas boot |
| d. the surgery left her with one leg | on three feet                |
| e. a model                           | her new limb                 |
| f. The new temporary foot is         | with a stronger limb         |
| g. time to adjust to                 | patient                      |
| h. get used to walking               | stepping on a landmine       |
| i. the muscles in her leg should     | on all fours again           |
| j. She will then be fitted           | headlines                    |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

### Landmine elephant gets new foot

**BNE:** A Thai elephant who \_\_\_\_\_ a foot after stepping on a landmine has been given a new one. She can now stop \_\_\_\_\_ on three feet. Motala, 44, \_\_\_\_\_ the world's headlines in 1999 when a landmine \_\_\_\_\_ off her front left foot. She was working at a logging \_\_\_\_\_ on the Thai-Myanmar border. Veterinarians removed her foot and the \_\_\_\_\_ left her with one leg shorter than the others. For the past six years, Motala has been \_\_\_\_\_ for at an elephant hospital. A staff member reports she is a \_\_\_\_\_ patient.

*camp*  
*model*  
*hit*  
*lost*  
*surgery*  
*ripped*  
*cared*  
*limping*

The new temporary foot is a \_\_\_\_\_-filled canvas boot. Vets plan to give Motala time to \_\_\_\_\_ to her new limb. She will \_\_\_\_\_ wear it for just a few hours a day. This will \_\_\_\_\_ her to get used to walking on all \_\_\_\_\_ again. So far, her vets are delighted she has not \_\_\_\_\_ the foot. After eight months, the muscles in her leg should have totally \_\_\_\_\_ for her to walk normally. She will then be fitted with a stronger \_\_\_\_\_ made from silicone and fiberglass.

*recovered*  
*initially*  
*fours*  
*sawdust*  
*allow*  
*rejected*  
*adjust*  
*limb*

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

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

- 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 gap fill. 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 "ELEPHANTS" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about elephants and landmines.

- 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:

- lost
- limping
- headlines
- logging
- removed
- model
- sawdust
- initially
- all fours
- delighted
- normally
- stronger

## DISCUSSION

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

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of Motala's story?
- d. Do you prefer this kind of news or more serious, political news?
- e. Do you think elephants should be used on logging camps?
- f. Do you like elephants?
- g. What do you know about landmines?
- h. Have you ever stayed in hospital or had surgery?
- i. Are you a model patient?

### 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. What do you think life would be like after losing a limb?
- d. Should something be done to stop elephants and other animals from working?
- e. Do you think animals should be used in circuses?
- f. Would you donate money towards a hospital for elephants?
- g. If you could talk to elephants, what question would you like to ask them?
- h. What do you think their reply would be?
- i. 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**

**MOTALA INTERVIEW:** In pairs / groups, write down questions you would like to ask Motala in an interview. The following words may be useful:

- Childhood
  
- Human contact
  
- Logging
  
- The explosion
  
- Post surgery
  
- Limping
  
- Hospital
  
- New foot
  
- Landmines
  
- The future

Take turns in role playing the interviewer and the elephant. Change partners and discuss what you heard from previous partners.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Landmine elephant gets new foot**

**BNE:** A Thai elephant who \_\_\_\_\_ a foot after stepping on a landmine has been given a new one. She can now stop \_\_\_\_\_ on three feet. Motala, 44, hit the world's headlines in 1999 when a landmine \_\_\_\_\_ off her front left foot. She was working at a logging camp on the Thai-Myanmar border. Veterinarians \_\_\_\_\_ her foot and the surgery left her with one leg shorter than the others. For the past six years, Motala has been \_\_\_\_\_ for at an elephant hospital. A staff member reports she is a \_\_\_\_\_ patient.

The new temporary foot is a sawdust-filled \_\_\_\_\_ boot. Vets plan to give Motala time to \_\_\_\_\_ to her new limb. She will \_\_\_\_\_ wear it for just a few hours a day. This will allow her to get used to walking on \_\_\_\_\_ again. So far, her vets are delighted she has not \_\_\_\_\_ the foot. After eight months, the muscles in her leg should have totally recovered for her to walk normally. She will then be \_\_\_\_\_ with a stronger limb made from silicone and fiberglass.

## **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 the charity Friends of the Asian Elephant. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. LETTER:** Write a letter to Motala the elephant. Tell her what you think of her experience, her recovery and her new foot. Tell her also what you hope for her future. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

**4. LANDMINES:** Create a poster about landmines. Show your poster to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all find out about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| a. stepping  | treading      |
| b. limping   | hobbling      |
| c. ripped    | tore          |
| d. removed   | amputated     |
| e. model     | perfect       |
| f. vets      | veterinarians |
| g. limb      | foot          |
| h. delighted | happy         |
| i. totally   | fully         |
| j. stronger  | sturdier      |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                      |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. lost a foot after                 | stepping on a landmine       |
| b. She can now stop limping          | on three feet                |
| c. hit the world's                   | headlines                    |
| d. the surgery left her with one leg | shorter than the others      |
| e. a model                           | patient                      |
| f. The new temporary foot is         | a sawdust-filled canvas boot |
| g. time to adjust to                 | her new limb                 |
| h. get used to walking               | on all fours again           |
| i. the muscles in her leg should     | have totally recovered       |
| j. She will then be fitted           | with a stronger limb         |

### GAP FILL:

#### Landmine elephant gets new foot

**BNE:** A Thai elephant who **lost** a foot after stepping on a landmine has been given a new one. She can now stop **limping** on three feet. Motala, 44, **hit** the world's headlines in 1999 when a landmine **ripped** off her front left foot. She was working at a logging **camp** on the Thai-Myanmar border. Veterinarians removed her foot and the **surgery** left her with one leg shorter than the others. For the past six years, Motala has been **cared** for at an elephant hospital. A staff member reports she is a **model** patient.

The new temporary foot is a **sawdust**-filled canvas boot. Vets plan to give Motala time to **adjust** to her new limb. She will **initially** wear it for just a few hours a day. This will **allow** her to get used to walking on all **fours** again. So far, her vets are delighted she has not **rejected** the foot. After eight months, the muscles in her leg should have totally **recovered** for her to walk normally. She will then be fitted with a stronger **limb** made from silicone and fiberglass.