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World's tallest man marries

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14th July, 2007

THE ARTICLE

World's tallest man marries

The world's tallest man has married a woman who is just two-thirds his height and half his age in a traditional ceremony in Mongolia. The wedding took place on July 12th at the tomb of the most famous ever Mongolian, Kublai Khan. The record-breaking 2.4 metre high groom Bao Xishun, 56, is a farmer from Mongolia. He met his bride Xia Shujian, 28, earlier this year after searching for a suitable woman by sending advertisements around the world. Xia is a petite 1.7 metres tall and comes up to her husband's elbow when standing side by side. In the end, he didn't have to look so far as his bride is a saleswoman from his own hometown. More than 2,000 people attended the happy day, including relatives, locals and a large crowd of journalists.

Bao wore a specially designed, traditional pale blue wedding robe underneath a decorative gold vest. He rode to his bride's relatives in front of the tomb in a wedding cart pulled by two camels. In keeping with Mongolian tradition, the bride's family tried to "stop" Bao reaching his bride, symbolizing the family's last efforts to protect her. However, they soon changed their minds after he pleaded to see and marry his intended. The bride's family accepted him and offered tea, which means he had been accepted into her family. Bao entered the Guinness Book of World Records last year as the world's tallest person. He was average height until the age of 16, when he suddenly shot up to his current height within seven years.

WARM-UPS

1. WEDDINGS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about weddings. 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.

height / age / traditional ceremonies / tombs / record breakers / elbows / crowds / pale blue / wedding robes / relatives / camels / brides / tea / aged 16

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

3. WEDDING: In pairs / groups, talk about your wedding ideas for these items:

- venue
- ceremony
- tradition
- relatives and guests
- clothes
- food
- honeymoon
- vows (promises)

4. RECORDS: Talk with your partner(s) about these records. Which would you like to break and why? Change partners and share what you said and heard.

- a) world's tallest person
- b) world's most intelligent person
- c) world's most married person
- d) world's greatest husband / wife
- e) world's most beautiful / handsome person
- f) world's oldest person

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

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think living together without getting married is best. Students B think the opposite. Change partners often. Share your findings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. The world's tallest man has married the world's tallest woman. T / F
- b. The ceremony took place at the tomb of a famous Mongolian. T / F
- c. The man found his bride through advertising worldwide. T / F
- d. There were no journalists among the 2 thousand wedding guests. T / F
- e. The groom wore a pale blue robe on top of a traditional gold vest. T / F
- f. Two camels pulled the bridegroom's wedding cart. T / F
- g. The bride's family tried to stop the groom from seeing his intended. T / F
- h. The groom was average height for his age when he was sixteen. T / F

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

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. ceremony | a. reporters |
| 2. petite | b. grew |
| 3. in the end | c. family |
| 4. journalists | d. small |
| 5. pale | e. betrothed |
| 6. relatives | f. celebration |
| 7. in keeping with | g. light |
| 8. intended | h. present |
| 9. shot up | i. sticking to |
| 10. current | j. eventually |

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

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. two-thirds his | a. last efforts to protect her |
| 2. The record-breaking | b. happy day |
| 3. Xia is a petite | c. with Mongolian tradition |
| 4. In the end, | d. 1.7 metres tall |
| 5. 2,000 people attended the | e. up to his current height |
| 6. a specially designed, traditional | f. height and half his age |
| 7. In keeping | g. pale blue wedding robe |
| 8. symbolizing the family's | h. 2.4 metre high groom |
| 9. he pleaded to see | i. he didn't have to look so far |
| 10. he suddenly shot | j. and marry his intended |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

World's tallest man marries

The world's tallest man has married a woman who is just _____ his height and half his _____ in a traditional ceremony in Mongolia. The wedding took _____ on July 12th at the tomb of the most famous ever Mongolian, Kublai Khan. The record-breaking 2.4 metre high _____ Bao Xishun, 56, is a farmer from Mongolia. He met his bride Xia Shujian, 28, earlier this year after searching for a _____ woman by sending advertisements around the world. Xia is a petite 1.7 metres tall and _____ up to her husband's elbow when standing side by side. In the _____, he didn't have to look so far as his bride is a saleswoman from his own hometown. More than 2,000 people attended the happy day, _____ relatives, locals and a large crowd of journalists.

comes
place
end
groom
including
two-thirds
suitable
age

Bao wore a specially designed, _____ pale blue wedding robe underneath a decorative gold vest. He rode to his bride's relatives in front of the tomb in a wedding _____ pulled by two camels. In keeping with Mongolian tradition, the bride's family tried to "stop" Bao _____ his bride, symbolizing the family's last _____ to protect her. However, they soon changed their minds after he _____ to see and marry his intended. The bride's family accepted him and offered tea, which means he had been accepted into her family. Bao _____ the Guinness Book of World Records last year as the world's tallest person. He was average height until the age of 16, when he suddenly _____ up to his _____ height within seven years.

current
reaching
pleaded
shot
traditional
efforts
entered
cart

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

World's tallest man marries

The world's tallest man has married a woman who _____ height and half his age in a traditional ceremony in Mongolia. The wedding took place on July 12th at the tomb _____ Mongolian, Kublai Khan. The record-breaking _____ Bao Xishun, 56, is a farmer from Mongolia. He met his bride Xia Shujian, 28, earlier this year _____ suitable woman by sending advertisements around the world. Xia is a petite 1.7 metres tall _____ husband's elbow when standing side by side. In the end, he didn't _____ bride is a saleswoman from his own hometown. More than 2,000 people _____, including relatives, locals and a large crowd of journalists.

Bao wore _____, traditional pale blue wedding robe underneath _____. He rode to his bride's relatives in front of the tomb in a wedding cart pulled by two camels. _____ Mongolian tradition, the bride's family tried to "stop" Bao reaching his bride, symbolizing _____ to protect her. However, they soon changed their minds after he pleaded to see _____. The bride's family accepted him and offered tea, which means he had been accepted into her family. Bao entered the Guinness Book of World Records last year as the world's tallest person. He was average height until the age of 16, when _____ his current height within seven years.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

two	third
------------	--------------

- 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">• just• famous• suitable• elbow• end• happy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pale• camels• symbolizing• pleaded• offered• shot
--	--

STUDENT WEDDINGS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about WEDDINGS 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 it's like to be the world's tallest person?
- c) What do you think it's like to be the world's shortest person??
- d) Would you prefer to be the tallest or the shortest person in the world?
- e) What are the good and bad things about being your height?
- f) Would you like a very traditional wedding?
- g) What do you think of the idea of advertising for a partner?
- h) Would you like 2,000 people to attend your wedding?
- i) Could you marry someone who is twice or half your age?
- j) Would you prefer to marry someone from your hometown or someone from another country?



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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What would you like to wear at your wedding?
- c) What kind of transport would you like to use to get to your wedding?
- d) Do you think there are many problems with in-laws when someone gets married?
- e) Do you think wedding ceremonies in your country or other countries are best?
- f) Do you think marriage is important?
- g) What happens at a traditional wedding in your country?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Bao?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Xia?
- 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?

LANGUAGE

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

World's tallest man marries

The world's tallest man has married a woman who is just two-(1) ____ his height and half his age in a traditional ceremony in Mongolia. The wedding took (2) ____ on July 12th at the tomb of the most famous (3) ____ Mongolian, Kublai Khan. The record-breaking 2.4 metre (4) ____ groom Bao Xishun, 56, is a farmer from Mongolia. He met his bride Xia Shujian, 28, earlier this year after searching for a suitable woman (5) ____ sending advertisements around the world. Xia is a petite 1.7 metres tall and comes up to her husband's elbow when standing side by side. In the end, he didn't have to look so far as his bride is a saleswoman from his own hometown. More than 2,000 people (6) ____ the happy day, including relatives, locals and a large crowd of journalists.

Bao wore a (7) ____ designed, traditional pale blue wedding robe underneath a decorative gold vest. He rode to his bride's relatives in front of the tomb in a wedding cart pulled by two camels. In (8) ____ with Mongolian tradition, the bride's family tried to "stop" Bao reaching his bride, symbolizing the family's (9) ____ efforts to protect her. However, they soon changed their minds after he (10) ____ to see and marry his intended. The bride's family accepted him and offered tea, which means he had been accepted (11) ____ her family. Bao entered the Guinness Book of World Records last year as the world's tallest person. He was average height until the age of 16, when he suddenly (12) ____ up to his current height within seven years.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) triple | (b) three | (c) third | (d) thirds |
| 2. | (a) place | (b) places | (c) placing | (d) placed |
| 3. | (a) person | (b) of | (c) ever | (d) never |
| 4. | (a) height | (b) high | (c) big | (d) large |
| 5. | (a) by | (b) with | (c) of | (d) in |
| 6. | (a) attend | (b) attended | (c) attendance | (d) attendant |
| 7. | (a) especially | (b) special | (c) specially | (d) specialty |
| 8. | (a) keeps | (b) kept | (c) keep | (d) keeping |
| 9. | (a) lasts | (b) lasting | (c) lastly | (d) last |
| 10. | (a) pleasant | (b) pleased | (c) pleaded | (d) pleasure |
| 11. | (a) into | (b) with | (c) onto | (d) to |
| 12. | (a) shoot | (b) shot | (c) shock | (d) shooting |

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 Guinness Book of Records. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. RECORDS: Make a poster showing the different records you would like to break and hold. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the married life of Bao and Xia. Include an imaginary interview with them both

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Bao. Ask him/her three questions about being so tall. Give three suggestions about how to live happily with Xia. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. ceremony | a. celebration |
| 2. petite | b. small |
| 3. in the end | c. eventually |
| 4. journalists | d. reporters |
| 5. pale | e. light |
| 6. relatives | f. family |
| 7. in keeping with | g. sticking to |
| 8. intended | h. betrothed |
| 9. shot up | i. grew |
| 10. current | j. present |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. two-thirds his | a. height and half his age |
| 2. The record-breaking | b. 2.4 metre high groom |
| 3. Xia is a petite | c. 1.7 metres tall |
| 4. In the end, | d. he didn't have to look so far |
| 5. 2,000 people attended the | e. happy day |
| 6. a specially designed, traditional | f. pale blue wedding robe |
| 7. In keeping | g. with Mongolian tradition |
| 8. symbolizing the family's | h. last efforts to protect her |
| 9. he pleaded to see | i. and marry his intended |
| 10. he suddenly shot | j. up to his current height |

GAP FILL:

World's tallest man marries

The world's tallest man has married a woman who is just **two-thirds** his height and half his **age** in a traditional ceremony in Mongolia. The wedding took **place** on July 12th at the tomb of the most famous ever Mongolian, Kublai Khan. The record-breaking 2.4 metre high **groom** Bao Xishun, 56, is a farmer from Mongolia. He met his bride Xia Shujian, 28, earlier this year after searching for a **suitable** woman by sending advertisements around the world. Xia is a petite 1.7 metres tall and **comes** up to her husband's elbow when standing side by side. In the **end**, he didn't have to look so far as his bride is a saleswoman from his own hometown. More than 2,000 people attended the happy day, **including** relatives, locals and a large crowd of journalists.

Bao wore a specially designed, **traditional** pale blue wedding robe underneath a decorative gold vest. He rode to his bride's relatives in front of the tomb in a wedding **cart** pulled by two camels. In keeping with Mongolian tradition, the bride's family tried to "stop" Bao **reaching** his bride, symbolizing the family's last **efforts** to protect her. However, they soon changed their minds after he **pleaded** to see and marry his intended. The bride's family accepted him and offered tea, which means he had been accepted into her family. Bao **entered** the Guinness Book of World Records last year as the world's tallest person. He was average height until the age of 16, when he suddenly **shot** up to his **current** height within seven years.

LANGUAGE WORK

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