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Disney Company targeting newborns

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

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9th February, 2011

THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

The Walt Disney Company is venturing into a new and untapped market - newborns. It already has a dominant presence in every other area of childhood, but now wants to start making money from babies. It has released a new product called Disney Baby. Sales agents have been visiting new mothers in maternity hospitals offering a baby suit in exchange for signing up to e-mails from DisneyBaby.com. Disney's new campaign is attracting criticism. Jeff McIntyre, director of the group Children Now, said: "This is taking advantage of families at an extremely vulnerable time." New mother Elizabeth Carter said: "It surprised me that Disney was in there promoting something right as the baby was born, but we figured as new parents we weren't in a position to turn free things down," she said.

Disney CEO Robert Iger believes his company is offering a fantastic product, saying: "If ever there was an opportunity for a trusted brand to enter a market and provide a better product and experience, it's this." He added: "It's about making something easier and providing [mothers] with a personalized, high-quality product." Iger estimates the North American newborn baby market alone to be worth \$36.3 billion a year. Other world markets will offer significantly more. Disney's last venture to sell products for babies did not prove to be wholly successful. In 2009, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood forced Disney to acknowledge that its Baby Einstein products did not turn babies into geniuses. The company ended up offering Baby Einstein refunds.

WARM-UPS

1. DISNEY: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Disney. 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.

venturing / dominant / new product / sales agents / criticism / taking advantage / fantastic products / opportunity / newborns / commercials / Einstein / refunds

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

3. UNTAPPED: What new markets could Disney venture into? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Disney for...	Product	Benefits for target market
babies		
studying English		
world leaders		
sports stars		
doctors		
the aged		

4. DISNEY BABY: Students A **strongly** believe it's wrong for Disney to target babies; Students B **strongly** believe it's OK. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. BABIES: Is it OK for any company to target babies? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most appropriate at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- Disney
- Nike
- McDonald's
- BMW
- HSBC bank
- Berlitz language schools
- Apple
- BBC

6. NEWBORN: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'newborn'. 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/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Disney is planning a new movie about newborn babies. | T / F |
| b. Disney sales staff are getting new mothers to sign up for e-mails. | T / F |
| c. A child protection organization is unhappy at Disney's e-mail campaign. | T / F |
| d. A mother said it was difficult to turn down Disney's offer. | T / F |
| e. Disney's CEO has cast doubt on the quality of the product for babies. | T / F |
| f. The global market value for newborns is close to \$40 billion. | T / F |
| g. Disney has always been successful in its attempts to profit from babies. | T / F |
| h. Disney had to return money to those who bought Baby Einstein goods. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. venturing | a. guesses |
| 2. untapped | b. pushing |
| 3. dominant | c. totally |
| 4. vulnerable | d. unopened |
| 5. promoting | e. finished |
| 6. opportunity | f. going |
| 7. estimates | g. greatly |
| 8. significantly | h. main |
| 9. wholly | i. chance |
| 10. ended up | j. defenseless |

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

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. venturing into a new and | a. significantly more |
| 2. It already has a dominant | b. things down |
| 3. attracting | c. product |
| 4. taking advantage | d. presence |
| 5. turn free | e. into geniuses |
| 6. offering a fantastic | f. was an opportunity |
| 7. If ever there | g. untapped market |
| 8. Other world markets will offer | h. successful |
| 9. did not prove to be wholly | i. criticism |
| 10. turn babies | j. of families |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

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

The Walt Disney Company is venturing into a new and (1) _____ market - newborns. It already has a dominant presence in every other (2) _____ of childhood, but now wants to start making money from babies. It has released a new product called Disney Baby. Sales (3) _____ have been visiting new mothers in maternity hospitals offering a baby suit in exchange for (4) _____ up to e-mails from DisneyBaby.com. Disney's new (5) _____ is attracting criticism. Jeff McIntyre, director of the group Children Now, said: "This is (6) _____ advantage of families at an extremely vulnerable time." New mother Elizabeth Carter said: "It surprised me that Disney was in there (7) _____ something right as the baby was born, but we figured as new parents we weren't in a position to turn free things (8) _____," she said.

signing
down
area
taking
promoting
untapped
campaign
agents

Disney CEO Robert Iger believes his company is offering a (9) _____ product, saying: "If (10) _____ there was an opportunity for a trusted brand to enter a market and provide a better product and experience, it's this." He added: "It's about making something easier and (11) _____ [mothers] with a personalized, high-quality product." Iger (12) _____ the North American newborn baby market alone to be worth \$36.3 billion a year. Other world markets will offer significantly (13) _____. Disney's last venture to sell products for babies did not prove to be (14) _____ successful. In 2009, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood forced Disney to acknowledge that its Baby Einstein products did not (15) _____ babies into geniuses. The company ended up offering Baby Einstein (16) _____.

wholly
providing
fantastic
more
refunds
estimates
ever
turn

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

The Walt Disney Company _____ new and untapped market - newborns. It already has a dominant presence _____ of childhood, but now wants to start making money from babies. It _____ product called Disney Baby. Sales agents have been visiting new mothers in maternity hospitals offering a baby _____ signing up to e-mails from DisneyBaby.com. Disney's new campaign is attracting criticism. Jeff McIntyre, director of the group Children Now, said: "_____ of families at an extremely vulnerable time." New mother Elizabeth Carter said: "It surprised me that Disney was in there promoting something right as the baby was born, but we figured as new parents we weren't in a position _____," she said.

Disney CEO Robert Iger believes his company _____ product, saying: "If ever there was an opportunity for a trusted brand to _____ provide a better product and experience, it's this." He added: "It's about _____ and providing [mothers] with a personalized, high-quality product." Iger estimates the North American newborn baby market alone to be worth \$36.3 billion a year. Other world markets will _____. Disney's last venture to sell products for babies did _____ successful. In 2009, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood forced Disney to acknowledge that its Baby Einstein products did _____ geniuses. The company ended up offering Baby Einstein refunds.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

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

maternity	hospital
------------------	-----------------

- 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">• venturing• start• visiting• exchange• taking• down	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fantastic• provide• high• alone• wholly• up
---	--

STUDENT DISNEY AND BABIES SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

Write five GOOD questions about Disney and babies 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.

DISNEY AND BABIES 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 'Disney'?
- c) Do you think Disney is a good company?
- d) What do you think of what was said in this article?
- e) Do you think it's OK for Disney to tap into the market for newborns?
- f) What do you think about Disney sales agents visiting hospitals to get new mothers to sign up for DisneyBaby.com?
- g) Do you agree with what Jeff McIntyre said?
- h) What three adjectives would you use to describe Disney?
- i) Should hospitals keep sales agents out of maternity wards?
- j) Do you think other global countries will now also start targeting the mothers of newborns?

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DISNEY AND BABIES DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Would you like to be the CEO of Disney? What would you do?
- c) Do you think Disney is going too far to make money?
- d) Do mothers really want personalized products from Disney?
- e) Do you think Disney will try and tap into markets all over the world?
- f) Do / Did you have any Disney things?
- g) What do you think of Disney movies?
- h) Disney is focusing on the teen market with creations like Hannah Montana. What do you think of this?
- i) What's the best product for a newborn baby / new mother?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Disney's CEO?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

The Walt Disney Company is venturing (1) ____ a new and untapped market - newborns. It already has a dominant presence in every other area of childhood, but now wants to start making money (2) ____ babies. It has released a new product called Disney Baby. Sales agents have been visiting new mothers in maternity hospitals offering a baby suit (3) ____ exchange for signing up to e-mails from DisneyBaby.com. Disney's new campaign is (4) ____ criticism. Jeff McIntyre, director of the group Children Now, said: "This is (5) ____ advantage of families at an extremely vulnerable time." New mother Elizabeth Carter said: "It surprised me that Disney was in there promoting something right as the baby was born, but we (6) ____ as new parents we weren't in a position to turn free things down," she said.

Disney CEO Robert Iger believes his company is offering a fantastic product, saying: "If (7) ____ there was an opportunity for a trusted brand to enter a market and provide a better product and experience, it's (8) ____." He added: "It's about making something easier and providing [mothers] with a personalized, high-quality product." Iger estimates the North American newborn baby market (9) ____ to be worth \$36.3 billion a year. Other world markets will offer significantly more. Disney's last venture to sell products for babies did not (10) ____ to be (11) ____ successful. In 2009, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood forced Disney to acknowledge that its Baby Einstein products did not (12) ____ babies into geniuses. The company ended up offering Baby Einstein refunds.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) to | (b) onto | (c) at | (d) into |
| 2. | (a) into | (b) from | (c) towards | (d) rather |
| 3. | (a) in | (b) at | (c) by | (d) for |
| 4. | (a) attractive | (b) attracted | (c) attracting | (d) attraction |
| 5. | (a) making | (b) waking | (c) taking | (d) faking |
| 6. | (a) added | (b) figured | (c) subtracted | (d) numbered |
| 7. | (a) ever | (b) even | (c) never | (d) event |
| 8. | (a) even | (b) anything | (c) the | (d) this |
| 9. | (a) lonely | (b) alone | (c) loner | (d) lonesome |
| 10. | (a) proven | (b) provable | (c) proof | (d) prove |
| 11. | (a) holy | (b) whole | (c) wholly | (d) holed up |
| 12. | (a) turn | (b) learn | (c) earn | (d) yearn |

WRITING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1102/110209-disney_baby.html

Write about **Disney and babies** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

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 DisneyBaby.com. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. DISNEY: Make a poster about the Walt Disney Company. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. DISNEY BABY.com: Write a magazine article about DisneyBaby.com. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against it.

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 the CEO of Disney. Ask him three questions about DisneyBaby.com. Give him three of your opinions on it. 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. T d. T e. F f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. venturing | a. going |
| 2. untapped | b. unopened |
| 3. dominant | c. main |
| 4. vulnerable | d. defenseless |
| 5. promoting | e. pushing |
| 6. opportunity | f. chance |
| 7. estimates | g. guesses |
| 8. significantly | h. greatly |
| 9. wholly | i. totally |
| 10. ended up | j. finished |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. venturing into a new and | a. untapped market |
| 2. It already has a dominant | b. presence |
| 3. attracting | c. criticism |
| 4. taking advantage | d. of families |
| 5. turn free | e. things down |
| 6. offering a fantastic | f. product |
| 7. If ever there | g. was an opportunity |
| 8. Other world markets will offer | h. significantly more |
| 9. did not prove to be wholly | i. successful |
| 10. turn babies | j. into geniuses |

GAP FILL:

Disney Company targeting newborns

The Walt Disney Company is venturing into a new and (1) **untapped** market - newborns. It already has a dominant presence in every other (2) **area** of childhood, but now wants to start making money from babies. It has released a new product called Disney Baby. Sales (3) **agents** have been visiting new mothers in maternity hospitals offering a baby suit in exchange for (4) **signing** up to e-mails from DisneyBaby.com. Disney's new (5) **campaign** is attracting criticism. Jeff McIntyre, director of the group Children Now, said: "This is (6) **taking** advantage of families at an extremely vulnerable time." New mother Elizabeth Carter said: "It surprised me that Disney was in there (7) **promoting** something right as the baby was born, but we figured as new parents we weren't in a position to turn free things (8) **down**," she said.

Disney CEO Robert Iger believes his company is offering a (9) **fantastic** product, saying: "If (10) **ever** there was an opportunity for a trusted brand to enter a market and provide a better product and experience, it's this." He added: "It's about making something easier and (11) **providing** [mothers] with a personalized, high-quality product." Iger (12) **estimates** the North American newborn baby market alone to be worth \$36.3 billion a year. Other world markets will offer significantly (13) **more**. Disney's last venture to sell products for babies did not prove to be (14) **wholly** successful. In 2009, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood forced Disney to acknowledge that its Baby Einstein products did not (15) **turn** babies into geniuses. The company ended up offering Baby Einstein (16) **refunds**.

LANGUAGE WORK

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