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## **Doctors separate twins joined at head**

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

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**19th September, 2011**

# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

Doctors in the U.K. have successfully separated a pair of Sudanese twins who were born with the tops of their heads joined together. The 11-month-old baby girls, Rital and Ritag Gaboura, had four different operations over four months. They are now doing well in a London hospital and are expected to make a full recovery. The rare condition that joined their heads happens once in about 2.5 million births. Surgery to separate them can be extremely dangerous as surgeons have to cut the brains and deal with the major flow of blood between the two brains. Such operations can leave significant neurological damage, although that does not appear to be the case with Rital and Ritag.

The charity Facing the World, which helps disfigured children, helped the twins receive the operation they needed. The charity's spokeswoman Sarah Driver-Jowitt described just how successful the surgery was: "Within days the twins were back on the general ward interacting and playing as before," she said. Lead surgeon Dr David Dunaway said: "Incidences of surviving twins with this condition are extremely rare. The task presented innumerable challenges and we were all very aware of our responsibility to the family and these two little girls." Another expert surgeon in this field, Dr James Goodrich, said: "So far the results have been exceptional. I think both kids will do quite well."

# WARM-UPS

**1. TWINS:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about twins. 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.

*doctors / pair of twins / operations / full recovery / rare condition / brain / damage / charity / spokeswoman / surviving / extremely rare / innumerable challenges / results*

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

**3. TWINS:** What (is it / would it be) like to be a twin? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

For	Good things	Not so good things
clothes		
personality		
friendship		
playing tricks		
family		
school		

**4. PERFECT SURGERY:** Students A **strongly** believe all surgery will be 100% successful in the future; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. CHARITY:** Which would you give your money to? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- children
- disaster victims
- medical research
- Greenpeace
- the World Wildlife Fund
- Amnesty International
- historic sight restoration
- abandoned pets

**6. TWINS:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'twins'. 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/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

## 1. TRUE / FALSE:

Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. Doctors have separated twin boys who were joined at the head.          | T / F |
| b. The twins had been joined for 11 years.                                | T / F |
| c. There is over a one-in-ten-million chance of being joined at the head. | T / F |
| d. The operation to separate the twins left no serious damage.            | T / F |
| e. The twins got their operation with the help of a charity.              | T / F |
| f. It took weeks for the twins to come out of intensive care.             | T / F |
| g. The doctor said it was rare for twins to survive this condition.       | T / F |
| h. A specialist in the field believes the twins will be just fine.        | T / F |

## 2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. separated    | a. specialist    |
| 2. operations   | b. seem          |
| 3. expected     | c. surgeries     |
| 4. rare         | d. occurrences   |
| 5. appear       | e. unconnected   |
| 6. disfigured   | f. countless     |
| 7. incidences   | g. uncommon      |
| 8. innumerable  | h. extraordinary |
| 9. expert       | i. believed      |
| 10. exceptional | j. impaired      |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH:

(Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. successfully separated a pair | a. of our responsibility  |
| 2. The rare condition that       | b. damage                 |
| 3. the major flow of blood       | c. days                   |
| 4. significant neurological      | d. of Sudanese twins      |
| 5. that does not appear          | e. between the two brains |
| 6. disfigured                    | f. do quite well          |
| 7. Within                        | g. joined their heads     |
| 8. extremely                     | h. children               |
| 9. we were all very aware        | i. to be the case         |
| 10. I think both kids will       | j. rare                   |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

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

Doctors in the U.K. have (1) \_\_\_\_\_ separated a pair of Sudanese twins who were born with the tops of their heads joined together. The 11-month-old baby girls, Rital and Ritag Gaboura, had four different operations (2) \_\_\_\_\_ four months. They are now doing well in a London hospital and are (3) \_\_\_\_\_ to make a full recovery. The rare (4) \_\_\_\_\_ that joined their heads happens once in about 2.5 million births. Surgery to separate them can be (5) \_\_\_\_\_ dangerous as surgeons have to cut the brains and (6) \_\_\_\_\_ with the major flow of blood between the two brains. Such operations can leave (7) \_\_\_\_\_ neurological damage, although that does not (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to be the case with Rital and Ritag.

*deal*  
*condition*  
*over*  
*significant*  
*appear*  
*successfully*  
*expected*  
*extremely*

The charity Facing the World, which helps (9) \_\_\_\_\_ children, helped the twins (10) \_\_\_\_\_ the operation they needed. The charity's spokeswoman Sarah Driver-Jowitt (11) \_\_\_\_\_ just how successful the surgery was: "Within days the twins were back on the general ward (12) \_\_\_\_\_ and playing as before," she said. Lead surgeon Dr David Dunaway said: "Incidences of (13) \_\_\_\_\_ twins with this condition are extremely rare. The task presented innumerable (14) \_\_\_\_\_ and we were all very aware of our responsibility to the family and these two little girls." Another (15) \_\_\_\_\_ surgeon in this field, Dr James Goodrich, said: "So far the (16) \_\_\_\_\_ have been exceptional. I think both kids will do quite well."

*challenges*  
*surviving*  
*receive*  
*results*  
*described*  
*disfigured*  
*expert*  
*interacting*

## LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

Doctors in the U.K. have \_\_\_\_\_ a pair of Sudanese twins who were born with the tops of their \_\_\_\_\_. The 11-month-old baby girls, Rital and Ritag Gaboura, had four different operations over four months. They are now doing well in a London hospital and are expected to \_\_\_\_\_. The rare condition that joined their heads happens once in about 2.5 million births. Surgery to separate them can \_\_\_\_\_ as surgeons have to cut the brains and deal with the \_\_\_\_\_ between the two brains. Such operations can leave significant \_\_\_\_\_, although that does not appear to be the case with Rital and Ritag.

The charity Facing the World, which \_\_\_\_\_, helped the twins receive the operation they needed. The charity's spokeswoman Sarah Driver-Jowitt described just how \_\_\_\_\_ was: "Within days the twins were back on the general ward \_\_\_\_\_ as before," she said. Lead surgeon Dr David Dunaway said: "Incidences of surviving twins with this \_\_\_\_\_ rare. The task presented innumerable challenges and we were all very aware of our responsibility to the family and these two little girls." Another \_\_\_\_\_ field, Dr James Goodrich, said: "So far the results \_\_\_\_\_. I think both kids will do quite well."

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

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

separate	twins

- 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"><li>• born</li><li>• months</li><li>• rare</li><li>• 2.5</li><li>• flow</li><li>• case</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• helps</li><li>• spokeswoman</li><li>• general</li><li>• rare</li><li>• expert</li><li>• results</li></ul>
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# STUDENT TWINS SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

Write five GOOD questions about twins 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.



## TWINS 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 'surgery'?
- c) What do you think about what you read?
- d) What do you think about the ability of surgeons who performed the operations?
- e) How do you think their parents feel?
- f) How will the successful operation change the twins' lives?
- g) What (do you think it's like / is it like) to be a twin?
- h) How do you think the surgeons felt during the operations?

*Doctors separate twins joined at head – 19th September, 2011*  
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## TWINS DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What three adjectives would you use to describe this article and why?
- c) Would you prefer to read good news stories like this or bad news stories?
- d) Can you imagine what the "innumerable challenges" were?
- e) Why do you think some twins are conjoined?
- f) What message would you like to give the twins?
- g) Have you ever had surgery?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the surgeons?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

Doctors in the U.K. have (1) \_\_\_\_ separated a pair of Sudanese twins who were born with the tops of their heads joined together. The 11-month-old baby girls, Rital and Ritag Gaboura, had four different operations (2) \_\_\_\_ four months. They are now doing well in a London hospital and are (3) \_\_\_\_ to make a full recovery. The rare condition that joined their heads happens once (4) \_\_\_\_ about 2.5 million births. Surgery to separate them can be extremely dangerous as surgeons have to cut the brains and deal with the (5) \_\_\_\_ flow of blood between the two brains. Such operations can leave significant neurological damage, although that does not (6) \_\_\_\_ to be the case with Rital and Ritag.

The charity Facing the World, which helps disfigured children, helped the twins (7) \_\_\_\_ the operation they needed. The charity's spokeswoman Sarah Driver-Jowitt described just (8) \_\_\_\_ successful the surgery was: "Within days the twins were back on the general ward interacting and playing as before," she said. Lead surgeon Dr David Dunaway said: "Incidences of surviving twins with this condition are extremely (9) \_\_\_\_\_. The task presented innumerable challenges and we were all very aware (10) \_\_\_\_ our responsibility to the family and these two little girls." Another expert surgeon in this (11) \_\_\_\_\_, Dr James Goodrich, said: "So far the results have been (12) \_\_\_\_\_. I think both kids will do quite well."

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

- |     |                  |                 |                |                 |
|-----|------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | (a) successfully | (b) success     | (c) successes  | (d) succeeded   |
| 2.  | (a) about        | (b) over        | (c) through    | (d) under       |
| 3.  | (a) expectation  | (b) expects     | (c) expected   | (d) expect      |
| 4.  | (a) on           | (b) over        | (c) under      | (d) in          |
| 5.  | (a) majorly      | (b) majority    | (c) majors     | (d) major       |
| 6.  | (a) reappear     | (b) appearance  | (c) appear     | (d) apparent    |
| 7.  | (a) receive      | (b) revive      | (c) review     | (d) reverie     |
| 8.  | (a) what         | (b) how         | (c) which      | (d) whose       |
| 9.  | (a) bare         | (b) pare        | (c) rare       | (d) dare        |
| 10. | (a) of           | (b) from        | (c) by         | (d) at          |
| 11. | (a) farm         | (b) park        | (c) field      | (d) pasture     |
| 12. | (a) except       | (b) exceptional | (c) exceptions | (d) expectation |

Doctors separate twins joined at head – 19th September, 2011

# WRITING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined\\_twins.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1109/110919-conjoined_twins.html)

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

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# 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 surgery to separate conjoined twins. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. TWINS:** Make a poster about twins. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. SURGERY:** Write a magazine article about Rital and Ritag's operation. Include imaginary interviews with the surgeon and parents.

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 a surgeon. Ask him/her three questions about performing surgery. Give him/her three of your opinions on his/her job. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

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

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. separated    | a. unconnected   |
| 2. operations   | b. surgeries     |
| 3. expected     | c. believed      |
| 4. rare         | d. uncommon      |
| 5. appear       | e. seem          |
| 6. disfigured   | f. impaired      |
| 7. incidences   | g. occurrences   |
| 8. innumerable  | h. countless     |
| 9. expert       | i. specialist    |
| 10. exceptional | j. extraordinary |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. successfully separated a pair | a. of Sudanese twins      |
| 2. The rare condition that       | b. joined their heads     |
| 3. the major flow of blood       | c. between the two brains |
| 4. significant neurological      | d. damage                 |
| 5. that does not appear          | e. to be the case         |
| 6. disfigured                    | f. children               |
| 7. Within                        | g. days                   |
| 8. extremely                     | h. rare                   |
| 9. we were all very aware        | i. of our responsibility  |
| 10. I think both kids will       | j. do quite well          |

## GAP FILL:

### Doctors separate twins joined at head

Doctors in the U.K. have (1) **successfully** separated a pair of Sudanese twins who were born with the tops of their heads joined together. The 11-month-old baby girls, Rital and Ritag Gaboura, had four different operations (2) **over** four months. They are now doing well in a London hospital and are (3) **expected** to make a full recovery. The rare (4) **condition** that joined their heads happens once in about 2.5 million births. Surgery to separate them can be (5) **extremely** dangerous as surgeons have to cut the brains and (6) **deal** with the major flow of blood between the two brains. Such operations can leave (7) **significant** neurological damage, although that does not (8) **appear** to be the case with Rital and Ritag.

The charity Facing the World, which helps (9) **disfigured** children, helped the twins (10) **receive** the operation they needed. The charity's spokeswoman Sarah Driver-Jowitt (11) **described** just how successful the surgery was: "Within days the twins were back on the general ward (12) **interacting** and playing as before," she said. Lead surgeon Dr David Dunaway said: "Incidences of (13) **surviving** twins with this condition are extremely rare. The task presented innumerable (14) **challenges** and we were all very aware of our responsibility to the family and these two little girls." Another (15) **expert** surgeon in this field, Dr James Goodrich, said: "So far the (16) **results** have been exceptional. I think both kids will do quite well."

## LANGUAGE WORK

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