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Woman has first face transplant

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1 December, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Woman has first face transplant

French doctors have finished the world's first face transplant. In the revolutionary operation, surgeons replaced the nose, lips and chin of a 38-year-old woman. The patient was attacked and disfigured by a dog in May. Her injuries meant she had difficulty talking and chewing food. Doctors say the woman is in "excellent" condition and that the transplanted organs look "normal". Doctor Jean-Michel Dubernard, the lead surgeon, refused to give details of the woman's condition and the chances of success. He did say that his patient wants to remain anonymous and that the organs were taken from a brain-dead woman.

Experts in facial reconstruction said the mouth and nose are the most difficult parts of the face to successfully transplant. In the past, surgeons have performed scalp and ear transplants. Facial injuries, such as those the woman suffered, have always been impossible to repair. If this surgery is successful, it will be a major breakthrough in reconstructive surgery for the actual face. The operation requires removing skin and muscles from the donor and attaching them to the patient's face. The appearance of the new face will be somewhere between the original face and the organ donor's face.

WARM-UPS

1. MY FACE: In pairs / groups, talk about your face. How happy are you with it? Which parts do you like? Which parts would you like to change? What kinds of changes would you like to make? Whose nose, lips, chin, etc. would you like?

2. TRANSPLANTS: Doctors can now transplant many different parts of our body. With your partner(s), discuss whether you would have any of the transplants below. How would each transplant affect your life?

- Nose
- Full face
- Hair
- Eyes
- Heart
- Brain
- Hand
- Lung

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

Doctors / faces / transplants / noses / lips / chins / organs / success / patients / facial injuries / muscles / surgery / major breakthroughs / organ donation

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

4. COMMENTS ON FACE TRANSPLANTS: What do you think of these comments on face transplants? Talk about them with your partner(s).

- a. Great. They will improve the lives of people with disfigured faces.
- b. This kind of thing should never be for cosmetic reasons.
- c. It's OK, but patients must have lots of counseling before the operation.
- d. Scary – Why would anyone want to look like someone else?
- e. We don't yet know enough about how emotions will change.
- f. Face transplants should only go ahead if they are life saving.
- g. The donor's parents would be upset at seeing their child's face on someone else.
- h. This could lead to all kinds of criminal activities and disguises.

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

6. QUICK DEBATE: Have a quick debate with your partner about facial transplants. Students A think they are a very bad idea, Students B think they could help many people and are a great idea .

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. Doctors have transplanted a woman's face for the first time ever. T / F
- b. The woman now has a new nose, lips and chin. T / F
- c. The woman had difficulty talking and chewing before the operation. T / F
- d. The woman wants to show her new face to the world. T / F
- e. Experts say eyes are the most difficult parts of the face to transplant. T / F
- f. Doctors have successfully transplanted ears and scalps in the past. T / F
- g. It is still unclear if the operation will be successful or not. T / F
- h. The new face will be almost identical to the donor's face. T / F

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

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| a. finished | connecting |
| b. revolutionary | look |
| c. problems | conducted |
| d. refused | groundbreaking |
| e. anonymous | difficulties |
| f. experts | unknown |
| g. performed | specialists |
| h. breakthrough | declined |
| i. attaching | step forward |
| j. appearance | completed |

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

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| a. French doctors have finished the | in reconstructive surgery |
| b. revolutionary | talking and chewing food |
| c. The patient was attacked | performed scalp and ear transplants |
| d. she had difficulty | to successfully transplant |
| e. chances | removing skin and muscles |
| f. facial | operation |
| g. the most difficult parts of the face | reconstruction |
| h. In the past, surgeons have | world's first face transplant |
| i. it will be a major breakthrough | of success |
| j. The operation requires | and disfigured by a dog |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Woman has first face transplant

French doctors have finished the world's _____ face transplant. In the revolutionary _____, surgeons replaced the nose, lips and chin of a 38-year-old woman. The patient was attacked and _____ by a dog in May. Her injuries meant she had difficulty talking and _____ food. Doctors say the woman is in "_____" condition and that the transplanted organs look "normal". Doctor Jean-Michel Dubernard, the _____ surgeon, refused to give details of the woman's condition and the chances of _____. He did say that his patient wants to remain anonymous and that the organs were taken from a _____ woman.

chewing
brain-dead
disfigured
first
success
lead
operation
excellent

_____ in facial reconstruction said the mouth and nose are the most difficult parts of the face to successfully transplant. In the _____, surgeons have performed scalp and ear transplants. Facial _____, such as those the woman suffered, have always been impossible to _____. If this surgery is successful, it will be a _____ breakthrough in reconstructive surgery for the _____ face. The operation requires removing skin and _____ from the donor and attaching them to the patient's face. The _____ of the new face will be somewhere between the original face and the organ donor's face.

actual
injuries
repair
appearance
experts
muscles
major
past

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Woman has first face transplant

French doctors have finished the _____ first face transplant. In the revolutionary operation, _____ replaced the nose, lips and chin of a 38-year-old woman. The patient was attacked and disfigured by a dog in May. Her injuries _____ she had difficulty talking and chewing food. Doctors say the woman is in "excellent" _____ and that the transplanted organs look "normal". Doctor Jean-Michel Dubernard, the _____ surgeon, refused to give details of the woman's condition and the _____ of success. He did say that his patient wants to _____ anonymous and that the organs were taken from a brain-dead woman.

Experts in _____ reconstruction said the mouth and nose are the most difficult parts of the face to successfully transplant. In the _____, surgeons have performed scalp and ear transplants. Facial injuries, _____ those the woman suffered, have always been impossible to _____. If this surgery is successful, it will be a _____ breakthrough in reconstructive surgery for the actual face. The operation requires removing skin and muscles from the _____ and attaching them to the patient's face. The appearance of the new face will be somewhere between the _____ face and the organ donor's face.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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. STUDENT "FACE TRANSPLANT" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about face transplants and whether they are a good or bad idea.

- 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:

- finished
- dog
- chewing
- excellent
- lead
- anonymous
- most difficult
- in the past
- impossible
- major breakthrough
- muscles
- original

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Are you happy for the woman in the article?
- c. Would you try a face transplant if you had a bad accident?
- d. What are the dangers if the transplant doesn't work?
- e. Even if it is successful, the woman will be on drugs forever and may get cancer. Is the operation worth it?
- f. What do we need to think about before allowing face transplants?
- g. Do you think someone who has a face transplant is a different person after?
- h. How do you think colleagues, family, friends, neighbors, etc. might react when they see someone they know with a different face?
- i. What would you say to someone you love if they told you they wanted a face transplant?
- j. In the future, there might be things like "order-made faces". What do you think of this?

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. Do you think this operation is the same as cosmetic surgery?
- d. How do you think the family of the donor will feel when they see their daughter's nose, lips and chin on someone else?
- e. What kind of counseling do you think people need before they have a face transplant?
- f. How do you think it would feel to look in the mirror after a face transplant and see a different person?
- g. Do you think face transplants can make people look better or do you think there might be unknown problems?
- h. Do you think criminals will find a way of using transplants in the future?
- i. Would you have a face transplant if you could have the face of a beautiful or handsome actor?
- 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?

SPEAKING

FACE TRANSPLANT COUNSELOR: You are an expert face transplant counselor. You must make a guidebook for other counselors. With the other expert face counselors, think of the possible problems of face transplants for the people in the table below. Think of some suggested solutions to these problems.

	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS
The person having the transplant		
The donor's family		
The partner of the patient		
The children of the patient		
The parents of the patient		
The colleagues of the patient		

- Change partners and compare and share your ideas.
- Give each other feedback on how to improve on the ideas.
- Give presentations on your ideas to other groups / the rest of the class.
- In pairs / groups, discuss the presentations and vote on the one you thought was best.
- Talk about the ethics of facial transplants. What kind of things would you need to consider before having one?
- Take a class vote on whether face transplants are OK.

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 this revolutionary operation. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. PROS AND CONS: Make a poster outlining the pros and cons of face transplants. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all think of similar things?

4. THE NEW ME: You've just had a face transplant. Three days ago you took the bandages off your face and looked in the mirror for the first time. What did you see? Who did you see? Write a diary / journal entry explaining your feelings before and after the bandages came off. What are your feelings now? Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. finished	completed
b. revolutionary	groundbreaking
c. problems	difficulties
d. refused	declined
e. anonymous	unknown
f. experts	specialists
g. performed	conducted
h. breakthrough	step forward
i. attaching	connecting
j. appearance	look

PHRASE MATCH:

a. French doctors have finished the	world's first face transplant
b. revolutionary	operation
c. The patient was attacked	and disfigured by a dog
d. she had difficulty	talking and chewing food
e. chances	of success
f. facial	reconstruction
g. the most difficult parts of the face	to successfully transplant
h. In the past, surgeons have	performed scalp and ear transplants
i. it will be a major breakthrough	in reconstructive surgery
j. The operation requires	removing skin and muscles

GAP FILL:

Woman has first face transplant

French doctors have finished the world's **first** face transplant. In the revolutionary **operation**, surgeons replaced the nose, lips and chin of a 38-year-old woman. The patient was attacked and **disfigured** by a dog in May. Her injuries meant she had difficulty talking and **chewing** food. Doctors say the woman is in "**excellent**" condition and that the transplanted organs look "normal". Doctor Jean-Michel Dubernard, the **lead** surgeon, refused to give details of the woman's condition and the chances of **success**. He did say that his patient wants to remain anonymous and that the organs were taken from a **brain-dead** woman.

Experts in facial reconstruction said the mouth and nose are the most difficult parts of the face to successfully transplant. In the **past**, surgeons have performed scalp and ear transplants. Facial **injuries**, such as those the woman suffered, have always been impossible to **repair**. If this surgery is successful, it will be a **major** breakthrough in reconstructive surgery for the **actual** face. The operation requires removing skin and **muscles** from the donor and attaching them to the patient's face. The **appearance** of the new face will be somewhere between the original face and the organ donor's face.