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Tom Cruise's son makes movie debut

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THE ARTICLE

Would you like your children to follow the same career path as yours? According to the USA's 'People' magazine, it seems Tom Cruise does. His son Connor is following in his famous father's footsteps by appearing in a Hollywood movie. He follows a long tradition of children following their parents' example and taking up acting. Many Hollywood kids grow up to be famous stars like their mothers and fathers. Connor, aged 13, made his debut in March in a new Will Smith movie called 'Seven Pounds'. Connor plays the part of Will Smith's character when he was a child. It's a minor role but could be the beginning of a major acting career. Connor is the youngest child of screen superstars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. The two actors adopted him in 1995 but split up and divorced five years later.

'People' magazine reported that Connor had to audition for the role along with other child actors. The magazine wrote that "Tom is so proud of Connor...for really doing this on his own." In truth, Connor didn't have to do a whole lot in his debut role. He spent just two days finishing his part and is mostly shown in photographs. Reports are that he doesn't speak in the film. Even though he auditioned for the part, it probably helped his chances a little that his Dad and Will Smith are best friends. Tom Cruise has done his best to shield his son from the limelight. He has stayed very quiet about Connor's first acting job. Hollywood is now full of gossip and rumours about who will get the first exclusive Connor Cruise interview. The movie tells the tale of a man, Will Smith, who affects the lives of seven strangers.

WARM-UPS

1. CHILDREN: Walk around the class and talk to other students about children. 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.

career path / following in people's footsteps / traditions / famous stars / adoption / auditions / pride / debuts / photographs / best friends / the limelight / interviews

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

3. WHEN I WAS FIVE: Complete the table about the jobs you wanted at different ages in your life. Why did you change your mind? Talk about your answers with your partner(s). Change partners and share your findings.

Age	I wanted to...	What happened?
5		
8		
12		
16		
20		
now		

4. CAREER PATH: You must choose the future career of your child. Talk about this with your partner(s). Rank these jobs in order of best to worst for your child. Talk about your rankings. Change partners and share your ideas.

_____ movie actor

_____ supermodel

_____ sports star

_____ teacher

_____ doctor

_____ pilot

_____ IT expert

_____ astronaut

5. HEADLINE PREDICTION: With your partner(s), use the words in the "Chat" activity above to predict what the news article will be about. Once you have your story, change partners and share them. Who was closest to the real story?

6. FOOTSTEPS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'footsteps'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. Tom Cruise's son, Connor, is going to produce his very first movie. T / F
- b. It is only recently that Hollywood kids have chosen careers in acting. T / F
- c. Connor starred in 13 movies when he was younger. T / F
- d. Connor's parents divorced before he was ten years old. T / F
- e. Tom is not happy that Connor has chosen to enter the movie business. T / F
- f. Connor's new film is a silent movie. T / F
- g. Tom Cruise has told everyone in Hollywood the news about his son. T / F
- h. Newspapers and TV channels want to get Connor's very first interview. T / F

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

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. path | a. starting |
| 2. tradition | b. protect |
| 3. taking up | c. went their separate ways |
| 4. minor | d. mainly |
| 5. split up | e. custom |
| 6. audition | f. pleased |
| 7. proud | g. media attention |
| 8. mostly | h. tryout |
| 9. shield | i. trail |
| 10. limelight | j. small |

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

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. children to follow the same career | a. their parents' example |
| 2. following in his famous father's | b. a whole lot |
| 3. a long tradition of children following | c. and divorced |
| 4. the beginning of a major | d. of a man |
| 5. split up | e. footsteps |
| 6. Connor had to audition for the role along | f. from the limelight |
| 7. Connor didn't have to do | g. gossip and rumours |
| 8. shield his son | h. path as yours |
| 9. Hollywood is now full of | i. acting career |
| 10. The movie tells the tale | j. with other child actors |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Would you like your children to follow the same career _____ as yours? According to the USA's 'People' magazine, it seems Tom Cruise does. His son Connor is following in his famous father's _____ by appearing in a Hollywood movie. He follows a long _____ of children following their parents' example and _____ up acting. Many Hollywood kids grow up to be famous stars like their mothers and fathers. Connor, aged 13, _____ his debut in March in a new Will Smith movie called 'Seven Pounds'. Connor plays the _____ of Will Smith's character when he was a child. It's a minor role but could be the beginning of a major acting career. Connor is the youngest child of _____ superstars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. The two actors _____ him in 1995 but split up and divorced five years later.

'People' magazine reported that Connor had to _____ for the role along with other child actors. The magazine wrote that "Tom is so _____ of Connor...for really doing this on his own." In truth, Connor didn't have to do a whole lot in his debut role. He _____ just two days finishing his _____ and is mostly shown in photographs. Reports are that he doesn't speak in the film. Even though he auditioned for the part, it probably helped his _____ a little that his Dad and Will Smith are best friends. Tom Cruise has done his best to _____ his son from the limelight. He has stayed very quiet about Connor's first acting job. Hollywood is now full of _____ and rumours about who will get the first _____ Connor Cruise interview. The movie tells the tale of a man, Will Smith, who affects the lives of seven strangers.

screen
tradition
made
path
adopted
taking
footsteps
part

gossip
chances
proud
shield
part
audition
exclusive
spent

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Would you like your children _____ career path as yours? According to the USA's 'People' magazine, it seems Tom Cruise does. His son Connor _____ father's footsteps by appearing in a Hollywood movie. He follows a long tradition of children following _____ taking up acting. Many Hollywood kids _____ stars like their mothers and fathers. Connor, aged 13, made his debut in March in a new Will Smith movie called 'Seven Pounds'. Connor plays the part of Will Smith's character when he was a child. It's _____ the beginning of a major acting career. Connor is the youngest _____ Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. The two actors adopted him in 1995 but _____ years later.

'People' magazine reported that Connor _____ along with other child actors. The magazine wrote that "Tom is so proud of Connor...for really doing this on his own." In truth, Connor didn't have _____ his debut role. He spent just two days finishing his part _____ photographs. Reports are that he doesn't speak in the film. Even though he auditioned for the part, it _____ a little that his Dad and Will Smith are best friends. Tom Cruise _____ his son from the limelight. He has stayed very quiet about Connor's first acting job. Hollywood is now full of gossip and rumours about who _____ Connor Cruise interview. The movie tells the tale of a man, Will Smith, _____ seven strangers.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

career	path
---------------	-------------

- 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">• path• footsteps• tradition• debut• minor• split	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• along• truth• mostly• chances• shield• full
--	--

STUDENT CAREER PATH SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about career paths 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.

CAREER PATH 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 'debut'?
- c) What do you think of Connor Cruise getting his first acting job?
- d) Would you like your children to get into acting?
- e) What was your first ever job?
- f) Do you think thirteen is too young to work in any kind of job?
- g) Would you like to follow in your parents' footsteps?
- h) What examples of your parents have you followed?
- i) Do you think Hollywood kids grow up to be normal?
- j) What do you think it'd be like having Hollywood actors for parents?

Tom Cruise's 13-year-old makes movie debut - 24th April, 2008
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CAREER PATH DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think the other kids stood a chance in the audition?
- c) What things in your life were your parents very proud of?
- d) What worries do you think Tom Cruise has about his son being in the limelight?
- e) What do you think of Hollywood gossip?
- f) Would you like to be a celebrity journalist working in Hollywood?
- g) What kinds of jobs would you like your children to do?
- h) Do you want to go and see the Connor Cruise movie?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Connor Cruise?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

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LANGUAGE

Would you like your children to follow the same career (1) _____ as yours? According to the USA's 'People' magazine, it seems Tom Cruise does. His son Connor is following in his famous father's (2) _____ by appearing in a Hollywood movie. He follows a long tradition (3) _____ children following their parents' example and taking (4) _____ acting. Many Hollywood kids grow up to be famous stars like their mothers and fathers. Connor, aged 13, made his debut in March in a new Will Smith movie called 'Seven Pounds'. Connor plays the part of Will Smith's character when he was a child. It's a (5) _____ role but could be the beginning of a major acting career. Connor is the youngest child of screen superstars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. The two actors adopted him in 1995 but (6) _____ up and divorced five years later.

'People' magazine reported that Connor had to audition for the role (7) _____ with other child actors. The magazine wrote that "Tom is so proud of Connor...for really doing this on his own." In (8) _____, Connor didn't have to do a whole lot in his debut role. He spent just two days finishing his part and is mostly (9) _____ in photographs. Reports are that he doesn't speak in the film. Even though he auditioned for the part, it probably helped his (10) _____ a little that his Dad and Will Smith are best friends. Tom Cruise has done his best to shield his son from the (11) _____. He has stayed very quiet about Connor's first acting job. Hollywood is now full of gossip and rumours about who will get the first exclusive Connor Cruise interview. The movie tells the (12) _____ of a man, Will Smith, who affects the lives of seven strangers.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) street | (b) pavement | (c) sidewalk | (d) path |
| 2. | (a) footpaths | (b) footprints | (c) footsteps | (d) footballs |
| 3. | (a) on | (b) of | (c) to | (d) for |
| 4. | (a) up | (b) of | (c) in | (d) down |
| 5. | (a) minus | (b) miner | (c) minor | (d) minder |
| 6. | (a) tear | (b) crack | (c) break | (d) split |
| 7. | (a) long | (b) along | (c) longest | (d) alone |
| 8. | (a) truth | (b) actual | (c) really | (d) honest |
| 9. | (a) shows | (b) shown | (c) showed | (d) show |
| 10. | (a) charges | (b) changes | (c) chances | (d) chants |
| 11. | (a) limelight | (b) lemongrass | (c) limestone | (d) lemonade |
| 12. | (a) tell | (b) tall | (c) tail | (d) tale |

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 about Connor Cruise and the movie 'Seven Pounds'. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. CHILD STARS: Make a poster about child stars. Did they grow up to be famous? Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. CHILD'S WORK: Write a magazine article about whether children aged 13 should be allowed to work. Include imaginary interviews with a 13-year-old movie star and a social worker who believes children should stay at school until they are 18.

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 Tom Cruise. Give him three pieces of advice on what he should do to shield his son from the limelight. Ask him three questions about his hopes for Connor. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

6. DIARY / JOURNAL: You are thirteen. You have just started a new job as a movie star. Your favourite actor is also in the movie. Write your diary entry for one day in your job. Include the conversations you have with the movie star. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. path | a. trail |
| 2. tradition | b. custom |
| 3. taking up | c. starting |
| 4. minor | d. small |
| 5. split up | e. went their separate ways |
| 6. audition | f. tryout |
| 7. proud | g. pleased |
| 8. mostly | h. mainly |
| 9. shield | i. protect |
| 10. limelight | j. media attention |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. children to follow the same career | a. path as yours |
| 2. following in his famous father's | b. footsteps |
| 3. a long tradition of children following | c. their parents' example |
| 4. the beginning of a major | d. acting career |
| 5. split up | e. and divorced |
| 6. Connor had to audition for the role along | f. with other child actors |
| 7. Connor didn't have to do | g. a whole lot |
| 8. shield his son | h. from the limelight |
| 9. Hollywood is now full of | i. gossip and rumours |
| 10. The movie tells the tale | j. of a man |

GAP FILL:

Tom Cruise's son makes movie debut

Would you like your children to follow the same career **path** as yours? According to the USA's 'People' magazine, it seems Tom Cruise does. His son Connor is following in his famous father's **footsteps** by appearing in a Hollywood movie. He follows a long **tradition** of children following their parents' example and **taking** up acting. Many Hollywood kids grow up to be famous stars like their mothers and fathers. Connor, aged 13, **made** his debut in March in a new Will Smith movie called 'Seven Pounds'. Connor plays the **part** of Will Smith's character when he was a child. It's a minor role but could be the beginning of a major acting career. Connor is the youngest child of **screen** superstars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. The two actors **adopted** him in 1995 but split up and divorced five years later.

'People' magazine reported that Connor had to **audition** for the role along with other child actors. The magazine wrote that "Tom is so **proud** of Connor...for really doing this on his own." In truth, Connor didn't have to do a whole lot in his debut role. He **spent** just two days finishing his **part** and is mostly shown in photographs. Reports are that he doesn't speak in the film. Even though he auditioned for the part, it probably helped his **chances** a little that his Dad and Will Smith are best friends. Tom Cruise has done his best to **shield** his son from the limelight. He has stayed very quiet about Connor's first acting job. Hollywood is now full of **gossip** and rumours about who will get the first **exclusive** Connor Cruise interview. The movie tells the tale of a man, Will Smith, who affects the lives of seven strangers.

LANGUAGE WORK

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