

US judge says no feeding tube (Wed 23 Mar, 2005)

WARM-UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about Terri Schiavo / the right to die / being kept alive by a feeding tube / the husband's wishes / the parents' wishes / the right to live / President Bush's motives / ...Change topic / partner frequently to increase conversation.

LIFE BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'life'. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

THE HISTORY:

(a) In pairs/groups, talk about who was right and who was wrong in the history of Terri Schiavo's case:

- Feb. 1990: Terri Schiavo collapses at home.
- Nov. 1992: Michael Schiavo is awarded \$1,000,000 compensation by a court for a hospital misdiagnosing his wife's condition.
- May 1998: Mr. Schiavo asks for his wife's feeding tube to be removed.
- May 1998-Feb 2000: Mrs Schiavo's family fights Mr. Schiavo's request in the courts.
- Nov. 2002: A Florida judge decides Mrs Schiavo has no hope of recovery and orders the feeding tube to be removed.
- Oct. 2003: Florida's governor Jeb Bush makes a special law ordering doctors to put the tube back.
- Sep. 2004: Florida's Supreme Court reverses Jeb Bush's law.
- Mar. 2005: Mr. Schiavo turns down \$1,000,000 from a Californian businessman to keep his wife alive.
- 21 Mar. 2005: President George W. Bush breaks his vacation in Texas and flies to Washington DC to sign an emergency law that takes away decision making in this case from Florida state.
- 22 Mar. 2005: A federal judge rules the feeding tube cannot be put back because Mrs Schiavo's parents could never win their case in a federal court.
- 22 Mar. 2005: Mrs Schiavo's parents and brothers say the judgment is "barbaric" and that Terri has the right to live.
- 23 Mar. 2005: Without her feeding tube, Mrs Schiavo will probably die within two weeks.

(b) Write down questions you want to ask about the actions of the people mentioned in the history above. Ask your questions to your partner / group.

ETHICS: Make a short list of the ethics involved in keeping Mrs Schiavo alive or allowing her to die. Compare with your partner / group members. Talk about whether you agree or disagree with the ethics.

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'right' and 'die'.

TRUE FALSE: Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. Events in the Terri Schiavo case made a U-turn again yesterday. T / F
- b. A judge decided a law passed by President George W. Bush was wrong. T / F
- c. A feeding tube keeping Terri Schiavo alive was reinserted. T / F
- d. Mrs Schiavo's parents can easily win a court case to keep Terri alive. T / F
- e. Terri Schiavo also needs a breathing machine. T / F
- f. Terri's husband wants his wife to die naturally and with dignity. T / F
- g. Mr. Schiavo is sure his wife would not want to be kept alive in this way. T / F
- h. Many Americans don't mind if President Bush's move was political. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| (a) case | meddling |
| (b) 180-degree turn | starving |
| (c) intervention | sure |
| (d) liberty | about face |
| (e) substantial | live |
| (f) cutting | lawsuit |
| (g) survive | freedom |
| (h) dignity | significant |
| (i) convinced | continual |
| (j) constant | respect |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) the right- | request |
| (b) took another 180-degree | making for the case away |
| (c) emergency | beating |
| (d) that took decision | is a political one |
| (e) substantial | turn |
| (f) her heart stopped | naturally |
| (g) to die | of recovery |
| (h) she has no hope | to-die case |
| (i) Her parents are desperate | likelihood of success |
| (j) President Bush's move | to keep Terri alive |

GAP FILL

US judge says no feeding tube

BNE: _____ in the right-to-die case of Terri Schiavo took another 180-degree turn earlier today. Despite the intervention of US president George W. Bush earlier in the week, a US federal judge in Florida _____ an emergency request to put back the feeding tube that would keep brain-damaged Mrs Schiavo alive. President Bush had made a special law on Monday that took _____ making for the case away from Florida State and into the federal government's hands. The federal judge _____ that the "life and liberty interests" of Mrs Schiavo had been protected by Florida courts, and that it was unlawful for a federal court to judge. He also said her parents had not _____ a "substantial likelihood of success" of winning a court case to keep their daughter alive.

ruled established refused events decision

Mrs Schiavo collapsed in 1990 when her heart stopped _____, cutting the oxygen supply to her brain. She can breathe _____, but needs the feeding tube to keep her alive. She could survive one to two weeks without the tube. Her husband wants his wife to die naturally and with _____ as she has no hope of recovery. He first asked doctors to remove the feeding tube in 1998. He is convinced his wife would not want to be kept alive in this way; being in a constant _____ state. Her parents are desperate to keep Terri alive, saying she has a right to live and that she responds to them. Many Americans are _____ that President Bush's move is a political one.

vegetative beating dignity angered unaided

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 information on PVS (persistent vegetative state). Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. ETHICS:** Make a short list of the ethics involved in keeping Mrs Schiavo alive or allowing her to die. Discuss these in your next class.
- 4. LETTER:** Imagine you are either one of Mrs Schiavo's parents or her husband. Write a letter to President George W. Bush expressing your concerns in this case.

DISCUSSION:

- a. What was interesting in this article?
- b. Were you surprised by anything in this article?
- c. Were you saddened by anything in this article?
- d. Were you angered by anything in this article?
- e. Do you have strong feelings over this case?
- f. Should Mrs Schiavo be allowed to die naturally?
- g. What would you do if you were one of her parents?
- h. What would you do if it were your husband / wife in the vegetative state?
- i. Should George W. Bush have got involved?
- j. Should people be kept alive by machines?
- k. Whose wishes are most important – Terri's husband's, parents', George W. Bush's?
- l. What is the law in your country in cases similar to this?
- m. What law would you make to decide this case?
- n. Should Mr. Schiavo wait for better technology to come along and keep his wife alive?
- o. Is this case similar to euthanasia?
- p. Did you like this discussion?
- q. Teacher / Student additional questions.

OPINIONS:

Talk about these with your partner. Decide on a percentage score how true they are (E.g. The first one is 100% true / wrong)

- a. Mrs Schiavo has a right to die.
- b. Mr. Schiavo is Terri's legal guardian and only he can decide.
- c. President Bush broke his holiday and flew to Texas because he cares about Terri.
- d. President Bush says he cares about Terri's right to live, but says nothing of the rights to live of 10 people shot to death in a Minnesota school.
- e. It isn't right for someone to be kept alive by machines. They should be left to die naturally.
- f. The parents should make the final decision as they brought Terri into this world.
- g. This case is for State law; Washington should stay out of it.
- h. Terri should be kept alive. She may recover if medical technology improves.
- i. Terri herself would probably want to die, and not just exist in a vegetative state.
- j. President Bush getting involved is dangerous. It means he must do the same in the thousands of other cases similar to this one.

TEXT

US judge says no feeding tube

BNE: Events in the right-to-die case of Terri Schiavo took another 180-degree turn earlier today. Despite the intervention of US president George W. Bush earlier in the week, a US federal judge in Florida **refused** an emergency request to put back the feeding tube that would keep brain-damaged Mrs Schiavo alive. President Bush had made a special law on Monday that took **decision** making for the case away from Florida State and into the federal government's hands. The federal judge **ruled** that the "life and liberty interests" of Mrs Schiavo had been protected by Florida courts, and that it was unlawful for a federal court to judge. He also said her parents had not **established** a "substantial likelihood of success" of winning a court case to keep their daughter alive.

Mrs Schiavo collapsed in 1990 when her heart stopped **beating**, cutting the oxygen supply to her brain. She can breathe **unaided**, but needs the feeding tube to keep her alive. She could survive one to two weeks without the tube. Her husband wants his wife to die naturally and with **dignity** as she has no hope of recovery. He first asked doctors to remove the feeding tube in 1998. He is convinced his wife would not want to be kept alive in this way; being in a constant **vegetative** state. Her parents are desperate to keep Terri alive, saying she has a right to live and that she responds to them. Many Americans are **angered** that President Bush's move is a political one.