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Disgraced Korean stem cell hero quits

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26 December, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Disgraced Korean stem cell hero quits

South Korea's most famous scientist Dr. Hwang Woo-Suk quit on December 23rd because of a major scandal. Scientists found out that his landmark paper on stem cell research was full of lies. His career and reputation now lay in ruins. He could also go to prison for cheating and damaging the image of his university and country. Seoul National University said his deception was a "major misconduct that undermines the fundamentals of science". Dr. Hwang apologized on national television. He said: "I am stepping down...[as professor]...to apologize for causing such big shocks and disappointment."

Dr. Hwang became famous in May 2005 for his work on the world's first cloned dog, an Afghan hound called Snuppy (an acronym from 'Seoul National University' and 'puppy'). He wrote a paper on stem cells, which are able to develop into any kind of human tissue. Many scientists trying to fight Parkinson's disease and other spinal cord injuries said the paper was groundbreaking. Dr Hwang became a national hero and was showered with honors, awards and research money. However, his lies came to the surface when younger scientists smelled a rat and accused him of fabricating data.

WARM-UPS

1. I'M A PROFESSOR: You are now a professor. Decide what your area of research is. Talk to the other "professors" in the class. Ask them about their work and research. What are the best and worst things about being a professor? What do you think of professors who cheat?

2. CHEATING: Do you think all cheating is bad? Do / Would you ever cheat? In pairs / groups, talk about how bad each of the following is:

- Inventing results in a science paper
- Using hidden notes in an exam
- Lying on your resume
- Using steroids in sport
- Call the ball out when it was in
- Look at your partners' cards
- Have two lovers at the same time
- Other _____

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

South Korea / scientists / scandals / lies / stem cell research / careers / ruins / cheating / science / apologies / cloning / heroes / smelling rats / data

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

4. FIELDS: Which of the following fields of research do you think are highly important? With your partner(s), discuss how important the research below is. How might it change your world?

- a. Stem cell research
- b. Hurricane and violent weather conditions research
- c. The history of the coal and steel industries in the 19th Century
- d. Research into second language learning
- e. Nuclear technology
- f. Research into what causes gum disease
- g. Longevity – how to increase our life span by 50 percent
- h. English vocabulary development

5. CHEATING OPINIONS: How far do you agree with these opinions?

- a. Nobody is 100 percent honest.
- b. Cheating is how most successful people get to the top.
- c. It needs a lot of intelligence to be a successful cheat.
- d. The world would be a better place if people stopped cheating.
- e. The biggest cheats are those in positions of power.
- f. I have never cheated in my life.
- g. Cheating should be made illegal.
- h. Even George W. Bush may have cheated once in his life.

6. CHEAT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "cheat". 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. South Korea's least famous scientist quit his post as professor. | T / F |
| b. The scientist's career and reputation is now in ruins. | T / F |
| c. His university said he had undermined the fundamentals of science. | T / F |
| d. In a televised apology, he said he would step up his shock research. | T / F |
| e. "Snuppy" is the name of a cloned Afghan hound and an acronym. | T / F |
| f. Stem cells can develop into any kind of human tissue. | T / F |
| g. The scientist was showered with roses, chocolates and other gifts. | T / F |
| h. Rats in the scientist's lab smelled very bad. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| a. quit | lie |
| b. reputation | essay |
| c. deception | hurts |
| d. undermines | image |
| e. stepping down | named |
| f. called | became suspicious |
| g. paper | inventing |
| h. groundbreaking | resigned |
| i. smelled a rat | resigning |
| j. fabricating | revolutionary |

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

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| a. quit on December 23 rd | first cloned dog |
| b. His career and reputation now lay | with honors |
| c. damaging the image | the fundamentals of science |
| d. misconduct that undermines | because of a major scandal |
| e. I am stepping down as professor | of his university and country |
| f. his work on the world's | a rat |
| g. stem cells, which are able to develop | in ruins |
| h. Parkinson's disease and other | to apologize |
| i. ...was showered | spinal cord injuries |
| j. younger scientists smelled | into any kind of human tissue |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

WORD ORDER: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Disgraced Korean stem cell hero quits

South Korea's most famous scientist Dr. Hwang Woo-Suk quit on December 23rd scandal of a major because. Scientists found out that his landmark paper on stem cell lies of research was full. His career and lay in reputation now ruins. He could also go to prison for cheating and damaging the image of his university and country. Seoul National University said his deception was a "major misconduct that the fundamentals of undermines science". Dr. Hwang apologized on national television. He said: "I am stepping down...[as professor]...to such shocks for big apologize causing and disappointment."

Dr. Hwang became famous in May 2005 on his world's the work for first cloned dog, an Afghan hound called Snuppy (an acronym from 'Seoul National University' and 'puppy'). He cells paper wrote on a stem, which are able to develop tissue into human of any kind. Many scientists trying to fight Parkinson's disease and other spinal cord injuries said the paper was groundbreaking. Dr Hwang became a national hero and honors with was showered, awards and research money. However, his lies came to the surface when younger scientists accused a rat and smelled him of fabricating data.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Disgraced Korean stem cell hero quits

South Korea's most famous scientist Dr. Hwang Woo-Suk _____ on December 23rd because of a major scandal. Scientists found out that his landmark paper on stem cell research was full of _____. His career and reputation now lay in ruins. He could also go to prison for cheating and damaging the _____ of his university and country. Seoul National University said his deception was a "major misconduct that _____ the fundamentals of science". Dr. Hwang apologized on national television. He said: "I am _____ down...[as professor]...to apologize for _____ such big shocks and disappointment."

Dr. Hwang became _____ in May 2005 for his work on the world's first cloned dog, an Afghan hound called Snuppy (an _____ from 'Seoul National University' and 'puppy'). He wrote a paper on stem cells, which are able to _____ into any kind of human tissue. Many scientists trying to fight Parkinson's disease and other spinal _____ injuries said the paper was groundbreaking. Dr Hwang became a national hero and was _____ with honors, awards and research money. However, his lies came to the surface when younger scientists _____ a rat and accused him of fabricating data.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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. WORD ORDER: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise.

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "CHEATING" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about cheating.

- 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:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| • quit | • dog |
| • landmark | • acronym |
| • ruins | • tissue |
| • fundamentals | • cord |
| • television | • showered |
| • shocks | • rat |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you know about stem cells?
- c. What do you think about people who cheat?
- d. What do you think about top scientists, sports stars or politicians who cheat?
- e. Have you ever cheated?
- f. What is your image of scientists?
- g. Has this scandal changed your image of scientists?
- h. Do you think Dr. Hwang can continue with his ruined career?
- i. Do you feel sorry for Dr. Hwang?
- j. Have you ever had to make a public apology?

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 Dr. Hwang should go to prison?
- d. Do you think it's really such a big shock to the science world?
- e. How would you feel if you were a colleague of Dr. Hwang at the Seoul National University?
- f. What do you think of cloned dogs?
- g. Do you think cures for spinal cord illnesses will be found one day?
- h. Have you ever smelled a rat?
- i. Would you like to be showered with awards, honors and money?
- 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

BIG CHEATS: In pairs / groups, decide on who is the biggest cheat in the table below. Put one of these numbers in the appropriate boxes in the "1-5" column.

5 = He / She should spend the rest of his/her life in prison.

4 = What he / did is very, very bad but life goes on.

3 = I can turn a blind eye to that.

2 = Hey... We all do it.

1 = That's a perfectly OK thing to do.

Agree on a score from 1 (not a cheat at all) to 100 (a total cheat) in the "Score" column.

	CHEAT	1 - 5	SCORE
1.	A scientist lies about test data in a research paper.		
2.	An intelligence officer lies about the existence of chemical weapons in another country and causes a war.		
3.	A husband or wife has a secret lover.		
4.	A politician puts the name of an elite university that he did not attend on his resume.		
5.	An athlete takes steroids and wins the 100-meter Olympic gold medal.		
6.	A student illegally downloads music into his/her portable audio player.		
7.	An architect fakes the safety records on apartment buildings. The apartments are in serious danger of collapsing.		
8.	A company employee claims for more expenses for a business trip than he/she actually spent		

Change partners and tell your new partner(s) about the scores you decided with your old partner(s).

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 Dr. Hwang Woo-Suk. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. MY CHEATING HISTORY: Write about some times when you cheated. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar ideas for cures?

4. CHEATING: Write a short essay on the part cheating plays in your culture. Do you think this is a good or bad thing? Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| a. quit | resigned |
| b. reputation | image |
| c. deception | lie |
| d. undermines | hurts |
| e. stepping down | resigning |
| f. called | named |
| g. paper | essay |
| h. groundbreaking | revolutionary |
| i. smelled a rat | became suspicious |
| j. fabricating | inventing |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| a. quit on December 23 rd | because of a major scandal |
| b. His career and reputation now lay | in ruins |
| c. damaging the image | of his university and country |
| d. misconduct that undermines | the fundamentals of science |
| e. I am stepping down as professor | to apologize |
| f. his work on the world's | first cloned dog |
| g. stem cells, which are able to develop | into any kind of human tissue |
| h. Parkinson's disease and other | spinal cord injuries |
| i. ...was showered | with honors |
| j. younger scientists smelled | a rat |

WORD ORDER:

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