

Talent

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Were you born with a talent? If yes, what is it?
If no, which talent do you wish you were born with?
2. Does a specific talent run in your family?
3. How do you encourage your friends
or family members to pursue their dreams?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. claim | a) to try to find |
| ___ 2. gift of the gab | b) seeking a goal or dream |
| ___ 3. destined | c) to hold onto anger about something |
| ___ 4. fill someone's shoes | d) to replace someone in the same line of work or duty |
| ___ 5. resent | e) a chance occurrence that leads to a goal being met |
| ___ 6. aspiring | f) to say with a firm belief |
| ___ 7. lucky break | g) to ruin, to flatten to nothing |
| ___ 8. crush | h) to solve |
| ___ 9. pursue | i) a strong ability to speak (or persuade) |
| ___ 10. figure out | j) to be meant (born) to do something (as if by an outside power) |

Reading

TALENT

Are we born with it?

1. What were you born to do? Was this a choice you made, or was this decision written in the stars?
2. Some people seem to be born with a gift. Mothers **claim** that their daughters were born with the **gift of the gab** or their sons were **destined to fill their father's shoes**. Specific types of talents seem to run in certain families.
3. Many athletes are trained at such a young age that it seems their parents are responsible for their success. Some **resent** their parents for pushing them to focus on only one thing. Others credit their parents for their talent and success.
4. These days, many people get their **lucky break** on reality TV. Others have their dreams **crushed** in these talent contests. Is there anything worse than hearing you don't have talent from a celebrity who does?
5. Getting paid to do what you love is a dream come true for many **aspiring** artists. Others prefer to keep their work and dreams separate and only pursue their talents as hobbies.
6. Lots of people are very good at two or more things. They can't decide which dream to **pursue**. Have you **figured out** what your calling is?

*“Genius is the
gold in the mine.
Talent is the miner
who works and
brings it out.”*

—Marguerite Blessington

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What is the reading mainly about?
2. According to the article, who is often responsible for an athlete's success?
3. What do aspiring artists often wish for?
4. Why does the reading mention reality TV?
5. How does the reading end?

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.
You may need to change the word forms.

1. If you want to _____ your dreams, you need to put them first on your list.
2. Casey couldn't _____ what to do with his life, so he took a year off work.
3. The actress got her _____ when a famous director saw her at a local shelter.
4. Maggie was _____ when the judge told her she had no singing talent.
5. From the time she could kick a ball, Amy seemed _____ to play sports.

B. Choose the Correct Word

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1. The contestants <u>claimed</u> that the voting system was unfair.</p> <p>a) believed
b) heard
c) wondered
d) cared</p> | <p>3. All of the <u>aspiring</u> dancers wanted to join the national ballet.</p> <p>a) young
b) talkative
c) goal-seeking
d) talented</p> | <p>5. Pauline <u>resented</u> the teacher who said she'd never be an artist.</p> <p>a) told others about
b) disagreed with
c) felt upset with
d) had a fear of</p> |
| <p>2. She was a natural TV reporter because she had the gift of the <u>gab</u>.</p> <p>a) talent
b) talking
c) photography
d) games</p> | <p>4. It is difficult to have your own dream when you are expected to <u>fill someone's shoes</u>.</p> <p>a) fit in with society
b) dream bigger dreams
c) become a replacement
d) accept nature's calling</p> | |

Discussion

1. Do you watch talent shows on TV? Why or why not?
2. Do you judge people based on their talent or lack of talent? Give an example.
3. Should parents have dreams for their children? Why or why not?
4. Are talented people happier than those who have not found their calling yet? Explain your opinion.

Class Opinion

Walk around the class and ask your classmates questions. Write their answers in the chart below.

Classmate's name:	Who is the most talented person you know?	What percent of success comes from hard work (vs. talent)?	If you could be born with any talent, what would it be?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

TALENT

Are we born with it?

1. What were you born to do? Was this a choice you made, or was this _____ written in the stars?
2. Some people seem to be born with a gift. Mothers _____ that their daughters were born with the _____ or their sons were _____ to _____ their father's shoes. Specific types of talents seem to run in certain families.
3. Many athletes are trained at such a young age that it seems their parents are responsible for their success. Some _____ their parents for pushing them to focus on only one thing. Others credit their parents for their _____ and success.
4. These days, many people get their _____ on reality TV. Others have their dreams _____ in these talent contests. Is there anything worse than hearing you don't have talent from a celebrity who does?
5. Getting paid to do what you love is a dream come true for many _____ artists. Others prefer to keep their work and dreams separate and only pursue their talents as hobbies.
6. Lots of people are very good at two or more things. They can't decide which dream to _____. Have you _____ what your calling is?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about talent and discuss whether people are born with it or not. This lesson includes vocabulary review tasks, discussion questions, and a class survey.

TEACHING TIPS:

See Discussion Starters Teaching Guide (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, talent, drive, success, athlete, artist, dreams, dream

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. f | 3. j | 5. c | 7. e | 9. a |
| 2. i | 4. d | 6. b | 8. g | 10. h |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

- This reading is mainly about talent and how people fulfill their callings.
- Athletes' parents are often responsible for the success of their children.
- Aspiring artists often wish they could get paid for their craft.
- Reality TV is mentioned to show how modern talent contests can make or break people.
- The reading ends with a direct question for the reader asking if he/she has figured out his/her calling (what one is supposedly born to do).

Vocabulary Review

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. pursue | 3. lucky break | 5. destined |
| 2. figure out | 4. crushed | |

B. CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 2. b | 3. c | 4. c | 5. c |
|------|------|------|------|------|

Discussion

Answers will vary.
Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Class Opinion

Have students walk around the class and ask their classmates questions. They should record their answers in the chart.

Listening

- decision
- claim, gift of the gab, destined, fill
- resent, talent
- lucky break, crushed
- aspiring
- pursue, figured out