Weekly English Practice

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English Coaching Projects S.Coop.

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Boy meets girl. Boy mows lawn. World goes bananas.

He just wanted to buy his girlfriend a pizza. Then the internet went and spoiled it all.

mow (v): *to cut grass, such as the lawn of a garden or park*
go bananas (exp): *to be very excited, angry or silly*
spoil (v): *to diminish or destroy the quality of something*
seeing (v): *dating, going out with somebody, go on a romantic date*
Pandora´s box (n): *a process that once begun generates many complicated problems*
escort (v): *accompany someone somewhere, show them to the table*
as hell: *used to emphasise a description of an unpleasant characteristic*
complimentary (adj): *given free of charge*
footage (n): *part of a cinema or television film that records a particular event*
unearth (v): *to find or discover something*

A 14-year-old boy goes door-to-door asking people if they want their lawn **mowed** for the very competitive price of $5. Cody wasn't having much luck though with this time-honoured way for teens to earn some money.

As he walked dejectedly away from yet another house, the homeowner, Ryan Cox, called him back .He asked Cody what he so badly needed the money for.

Cody replied that he had been **seeing** this girl for the last six months. But they hadn't been on a real date yet. The reason he was going around people's houses offering to cut their lawn was to make enough money to bring his girlfriend out on a "real" date – to an actual pizza restaurant.

Cox was impressed by Cody's work ethic and good intentions: he hired the 14-year-old to mow his lawn. He took a picture of him while he was working and posted it and Cody's romantic story on Facebook. Little did Cox know he had just opened **Pandora's box**.

Cody made a very commendable $45 from mowing lawns that day and true to his word, the next day he excitedly brought his girlfriend, Audrey, out to lunch.

When they arrived at the pizza restaurant, the manager was waiting for them. The couple were **escorted** to a table which was draped in a tablecloth.

Despite it being lunchtime, the manager had lit candles. As a 14-year-old on his first real date, Cody was "**embarrassed as hell**".

The restaurant had heard about the Facebook post so the food was **complimentary**.

So had everyone else: the tale of the 14-year-old mowing people's lawns so he could bring his girlfriend out on a real date "melted the heart of the internet".

The media were also waiting at the restaurant. A still photograph of the table where Cody and Audrey ate their pizza appeared in the newspapers.

The young couple were interviewed by news crews and were utterly bemused by all the attention. Cody told reporters that he was going to save up to buy a truck so he could start his own lawn-mowing business.

As the pictures and video **footage** of the first date went up online, messages of love and support came in from thousands of people in places as diverse as Switzerland and Vietnam.

Because Cody became a media story, there was "additional research" carried out on him which **"unearthed"** three Instagram accounts under his name and profile picture.

On these accounts there were pictures of him smoking marijuana, one captioned with the phrase: "Boring weekend, gotta buy me some weed".

Cody, in the presence of his mother, later admitted that these were in fact his accounts. When asked by a journalist if he was using the money he earned from mowing lawns to buy drugs, he stated that he got the marijuana he smoked for free. However, he refused to disclose where he got it from.

Adapted from:

http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/cody-mitschelin-boy-meets-girl-boy-mows-lawn-world-goes-bananas-1.2594204

"iLook, iThink, iSpeak" Express yourself better!

Here are some comments made by people who read Cody's story

1. One young woman who had been in a domestic violence situation wrote to say that her faith in humanity was restored because of Cody's actions.

2. There were other messages too: people mocked and ridiculed Cody's appearance and his shy demeanour.

3. Advice on his first date was offered – the type of advice that really should be shielded from a 14-year-old. There were also comments about what else a 14-year-old boy could do to make some easy money.

4. And an argument started: "Wasn't it sexist of Cody to insist on paying the bill?"" Why wasn't Audrey paying her half?" "Was this how the relationship was going to progress – with the "man" paying for everything?"

5. All this aside, is it not embarrassing and nerve-racking enough to be 14 and going through a rite of passage without having the eyes and the ears of the world watching and listening? And commenting?

6. Cody wanted to do a lovely thing for his girlfriend. But when his story was put online (however well-meaning that was), Cody was thrown on the bonfire of the vanities that is today's social media.

7. A 14-year-old (who is legally a minor) should have the inalienable right be left alone to experience all the excitement, apprehension, joy and fear of a first date as a personal and significant event.

ECP

LIVE! English Events

LIVE!English presents:

A VISIT TO ERREKALEOR

(SPAIN'S LARGEST OCCUPIED NEIGHBOURHOOD!)

DATE: 7TH MAY
TIME: ALL DAY!

THERE WILL BE MUSIC, DANCE, A FAIR AND A GUIDED TOUR OF THE AREA IN ENGLISH.

COME AND LEARN ABOUT ERREKALEOR'S HISTORY AND CURRENT SITUATION.

For more info contact:
ali@englishcoachingprojects.net

"Let's chat about that!

(read the article on page 1)

Write your answers in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- Do you think Ryan Cox did the right thing by posting Coby's story on Facebook?
- Do you believe Coby really wanted to earn money to bring his girlfriend on a nice date? Why/not?
- Do you think the man should pay on a first date? Give reasons for your answer
- Should Cody's story have been made public?
- How did you feel when you read that Coby smoked marijuana? Did it change your opinion of him?
- What do you believe his mother thinks of all this public attention?
- What comment would you post after reading this article?

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