

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 2

#156 Five Child Prodigies: Wong Ka Jeng

Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Listening and Writing Skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

Qt 1: Are you interested in music? Can you play any musical instrument?

Qt 2: Piano lessons are common to many Hong Kong children. Have you ever taken any?

Qt 3: Is Hong Kong culture nurturing musical talent?

Qt 4: Do you know of any music prodigies from Hong Kong?

The answer to Qt 3 will be provided in the next set of exercises.

Vocabulary

- Goldmine (noun): something from which a person can earn a lot of money.
- Limelight (noun): public attention and interest.
- Goal-oriented (adjective): a “goal-oriented” plan or activity is based on a number of things that must be achieved.
- Recital (noun): a performance of music or poetry, usually given by one person or a small group of people.

PART 2: Article for Reading

Mozart is reputed to have started composing music at the age of five. Wong Ka Jeng, a Hong Kong-born music prodigy featured in a 2009 documentary, *KJ: Music and Life*, started out at seven. What is remarkable about Ka Jeng is that to this day he has retained his love for music and is still developing himself artistically. This stands in stark contrast to most music learners who cannot wait to become music teachers and make good money:

Kajeng Wong, Music Prodigy, Says Hong Kong Is a Goldmine for Classical Artists

<https://www.scmp.com/magazines/hk-magazine/article/2037999/kajeng-wong-music-prodigy-says-hong-kong-goldmine-classical>

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

Listen to the following conversation between Ka Jeng and French composer Émile Naoumoff:

The Integrated Musician Part 1: The Composer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twB-Mc0Ce_I

Although informal by nature, this is a sort of high-level talk only understandable to those already in the know.

PART 4: Writing Practice

Did you notice how Ka Jeng describes himself in the main text?

I didn't start learning [the piano] very early, only when I was 7 years old. But I caught on very quickly, maybe because I wanted to play it well for my dad.

“Caught on” here means understood, especially after a period of uncertainty or hesitation. It has nothing to do with the literal meaning of catching, or taking hold of something moving.

Another example of its use is this:

We were teasing Jeff, but he was slow to catch on that we were joking.

This means that Jeff was not being amused or annoyed when people were joking about him. He just did not know until later.

Can you write a sentence of your own using the expression “to catch on”? Send your writing to: see.u@cccu.edu.hk. Remember! Our **SEE U** teachers are always ready to give you feedback.