

# Two Law Cases

## English Effective Communication

### PROCEDURE

Divide the class into pairs. Give each student a copy of either the A or B reading sheets. The students read the short articles silently by themselves and use a dictionary or consult the teacher if they don't understand a word or phrase. After the students have read and understood the articles, the teacher takes the articles away. Then student A will communicate what was in A's article to student B, and student B will communicate what was in B's article to A. Then all of the students take a test to see how much information they were able to communicate.

## The Stella Awards

The Stella awards are given every year to the most outrageous lawsuit. The Stella awards get their name from an old woman named Stella Liebeck.

In 1992, Stella Liebeck ordered a cup of coffee from McDonald's and accidentally spilt it on herself. She suffered third degree burns. And had to stay in the hospital for a long time. The burns were quite severe and it cost her \$20,000 in medical expenses.

Stella asked McDonald's to

## 2002 Stella Awards Winner

In 2002, the Stella award for the most outrageous lawsuit went to two sisters, Dayle and Janice Bird.

Dayle and Janice Bird had been watching their mother get an operation in a hospital. The operation was very minor.

Suddenly, the doctors rushed the mother to another room. The doctors didn't tell the two sisters why the mother was rushed to another room.

The two sisters were very distressed. They thought that

pay for the medical expenses but McDonald's refused to pay. So Stella took them to court. Stella argued that the coffee was too hot.

McDonald's claimed that people like their coffee hot and that the best flavor comes when coffee is heated to 80 degrees Celsius.

The court ruled in favor of Stella Liebeck and ordered McDonald's to pay her \$2.9 million dollars. Many people were angry that she won so much money for spilling coffee on herself.

their mother might be dying. The mother was actually OK in the end. But the sisters were angry because the doctors didn't tell them what was happening.

Though the mother was OK, the two sisters tried to sue the hospital after that. They claimed that watching their mother being rushed to another room caused them too much stress.

The court ruled in favor of the hospital. And it's a good thing too! If the sisters had won the case, hospitals would never let people watch operations again because the hospitals would worry about being sued.



### The Stella Awards

What are the Stella awards given for?

Who are the Stella awards named after?

Who did she sue?

What did she accidentally do?

What injury did she suffer?

How much were her medical expenses?

What did Stella argue in court?

### 2002 Stella Awards Winner

What year is this article about?

Who won the award?

What were the sisters doing?

Was it a serious operation?

What happened suddenly?

How did the sisters feel?

What did the sisters think might be happening to their mother?

Why were the sisters angry with the doctors?



What did McDonald's say?

What temperature is best for making coffee?

Who did the court rule in favor of?

How much money did she win?

Why are people angry?

Did the mother die?

Why did the sister try to sue the hospital?

Who did the court rule in favor of?

What would hospitals do if the sisters won the case?