

CHRISTCHURCH WIZARD LET GO

Oct 26, 2021

WARM-UP QUESTIONS • *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s).*

1. Have you performed or spoken in public? What did you do? How do you feel about having an audience?
2. Read the headline above. Have you heard this news story? If so, say what you know. If not, can you guess what it's about?

VOCABULARY • *Match the following vocabulary words with a description. Use a dictionary if you need to.*

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Wizard | a) a piece of equipment for climbing up and down |
| 2. Let go | b) the personality that someone has that is different from their real or private character |
| 3. Persona | c) not serious |
| 4. Atop | d) magical words that are said to give someone trouble |
| 5. Ladder | e) a long loose piece of clothing |
| 6. Gown | f) a person with magical powers |
| 7. Staff | g) on top of |
| 8. Tongue-in-cheek | h) an area of knowledge or activity |
| 9. Realm | i) to make someone leave a job |
| 10. Curse | j) a long stick used to help with walking or fighting |

LISTEN • *Listen to the audio track on eslnewsstories.com or to a reader of the text. Try to fill in the missing words. Then check your answer with the full text.*

The only publicly employed wizard in the _____ will no longer receive a paycheck after this year. The Wizard of Christchurch, in New Zealand, has been told by the city council that they will _____ paying him a \$NZ16 000 salary. The Wizard, whose real name is Ian Brackenbury Channell, has been paid the small salary since 1998. However, he has been doing his wizardly _____ for much longer.

Mr. Channell, originally from England, started to _____ a wizard persona while teaching at the University of New South Wales in Sydney in the late 1960s. He moved to Christchurch in 1972 and continued to perform as The Wizard, frequently speaking to the _____ from atop a ladder in Christchurch's Cathedral Square, dressed in wizard's hat and gown, with a long beard and a staff.

Over the years, various government _____ have embraced the Wizard as something of a tourist attraction in the heart of the city. His payment started in recognition of the promotional _____ of his work, and there have been frequent tongue-in-cheek references to his _____ in the magical realm. In 1990, the Prime Minister of New Zealand suggested that the Wizard extend his magical services to the rest of the country.

At 88, Mr. Channell may not be _____ for a wizard, but he is well past the retirement age for most workers. He is unhappy about the council's decision, but he claims he will not put a curse on them, and although he will not be paid, he will _____ talking to tourists as The Wizard.

The only publicly employed wizard in the world will no longer receive a paycheck after this year. The Wizard of Christchurch, in New Zealand, has been told by the city council that they will stop paying him a \$NZ16 000 salary. The Wizard, whose real name is Ian Brackenbury Channell, has been paid the small salary since 1998. However, he has been doing his wizardly performance for much longer.

Mr. Channell, originally from England, started to develop a wizard persona while teaching at the University of New South Wales in Sydney in the late 1960s. He moved to Christchurch in 1972 and continued to perform as The Wizard, frequently speaking to the public from atop a ladder in Christchurch's Cathedral Square, dressed in wizard's hat and gown, with a long beard and a staff.

Over the years, various government officials have embraced the Wizard as something of a tourist attraction in the heart of the city. His payment started in recognition of the promotional value of his work, and there have been frequent tongue-in-cheek references to his work in the magical realm. In 1990, the Prime Minister of New Zealand suggested that the Wizard extend his magical services to the rest of the country.

At 88, Mr. Channell may not be old for a wizard, but he is well past the retirement age for most workers. He is unhappy about the council's decision, but he claims he will not put a curse on them, and although he will not be paid, he will continue talking to tourists as The Wizard.

Sources: nytimes.com, apnews.com, bbc.com, en.wikipedia.org
For source links, see the article on ESLNewsStories.com

COMPREHENSION • *Decide if the following are true (T) or false (F), and then discuss your answers with your partner(s).*

1. A city council in New Zealand recently hired a wizard. (T / F)
2. The Wizard is originally from Australia. (T / F)
3. The Wizard dresses like a wizard. (T / F)
4. The Wizard is happy to retire. (T / F)
5. The Wizard was paid for his promotional work. (T / F)

WORD FORMS • Fill in the different forms for the vocabulary from the article. Use a dictionary if you need to. Where there is an **x**, the word is uncommon, has a different meaning, or doesn't exist.

VERB	ADJECTIVE	ADVERB	NOUN
			Curse
		x	Wizard

COMPLETE • Re-order the following sentences. You should capitalize certain words and add punctuation.

- will / paying / the / wizard / stop / they

- put / he / on / the / curse / won't / a / council

DISCUSSION • Discuss the following questions with your partner(s). Try to speak in sentences and ask follow-up questions.

- Are there any unusual characters around your city? What makes them interesting or recognizable?
- Have you ever been let go from a job? What happened?
- Do you believe in magic? What is magic?
- If someone in your culture claimed to have magical powers, how would they be treated?
- How would you feel if someone put a curse on you? Would you be worried?
- Is your hometown a tourist destination? Why do tourists visit or not visit there?
- How can a place attract more tourists? What methods can increase tourism?
- What age do people generally retire in your country? What age would be good to retire, in your opinion?
- How do retired people live in your country? Do they have to survive off savings?
- Do you have a public persona that is different from your private persona? What's different about the public you and the private you?

VOCABULARY answers: 1-f, 2-i, 3-b, 4-g, 5-a, 6-e, 7-j, 8-c, 9-h, 10-d

COMPREHENSION answers: 1-F, 2-F, 3-T, 4-F, 5-T.

WORD FORMS answers: curse, cursedly, cursed, wizard, wizardly

COMPLETE answers: 1. They will stop paying The Wizard. 2. He won't put a curse on the council.