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Weston's world champion hairdresser

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http://www.bbc.co.uk/somerset/content/articles/2008/03/20/hair_award_feature.shtml

A Weston hairdresser has been crowned world champion for his bold colour and asymmetric design in the **equivalent** of the hair Olympics in Chicago.



Steve Smart, owner of Hair Wizard in Weston Boulevard, has won the OMC Hairworld Championships in a solo event for **trend**, cut and colour. The hair takes six months to prepare

"I want to prove you can be the best and come from a small town" Steve Smart, OMC Hairworld 2008 champion. It's the third time he's entered the **competition**, in which he'd only ever been a runner-up before.

Steve said: "You don't get any prize money. It's all about the **prestige** and knowing you've competed against the best in the world and won."

Mandy Bunchombe, a 22-year-old qualified motorcycle mechanic, and her sister Penny 19, a trainee hairdresser from Weston, are two of his biggest fans.

To celebrate Steve offered to style Mandy's hair for free, much to Penny's annoyance.



Mandy said: "I'm really nervous. It's the world champion. Just that little word gets you all excited and nervous."

Penny added: "It's an **indescribable** feeling. It's weird being stood in a salon with the world champion when I'm in my first year at college training to be a hairdresser.

It's a bit like meeting a pop idol. I don't look up to many people but he is what I want to be."

The OMC Hairworld Championships is one of only eight major international competitions designed to test technical skill and attracts entries from 65 countries.

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The National Federation of Hairdressers chose an **elite** group from over 1,000 people to represent England in the competition.



Steve started preparing the model's hair six months in advance of the competition. He said his competition work is like the 'haute **couture**' of hairdressing'.

Despite reaching the highest level of technical perfection in his industry, Steve said he had no plans to take his skills to a bigger city.

"I grew up in Weston, I went to school here and I've never thought about moving to London or any of the bigger cities because I want to prove you can be the best and come from a small town." He said he was known around town for his 'big hair and big glasses'.

But hairdressing wasn't always his **passion**. He showed no interest in it until his mum asked him what he was going to do when he finished college.

"I knew I wanted to do something creative, I knew I didn't want to be pushing a pen around all day and I said I wanted to work with women. So she said, you had better be a ladies hairdresser then and here I am."

Steve trained with Robert Hancock for six years before opening his own salon in Weston. He made his name with bold colours and asymmetric designs, but said he was inspired by the styles from the 1940s.



"Some of the skills that were taught 30 years ago are not being used now, so competition hairdressing can give you those skills back.

"A lot of the work that you'll see in magazines, on the catwalk and on the red carpet, the stylists use very traditional **techniques** to create them."

His style icons include Gwen Steffani's style and the burlesque dancer Dita Von Teese.

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Read the article on pages 1 and 2. Answer the questions

1. What was Steve Smart crowned for?
2. What is the name of his salon and where is it based?
3. How many times did he enter the competition?
4. What did Steve get for winning?
5. Who are Steve's biggest fans and what do they do for a living?
6. Which phrase tells us how Mandy felt about Steve winning the competition?
7. Why did Penny compare Steve to a pop idol, and why was she annoyed?
8. What does OMC Hairworld Championships test during the competitions and how many countries participate?
9. What do the National Federation of Hairdressers do every year?
10. How long did Steve prepare for the competition and what did he compare his competition work to?
11. Which phrase tells us why Steve is still living in Weston?
12. What was he well known for in Weston town?
13. What did he want to do when he left school and who encouraged him to become a hairdresser?
14. Who trained Steve and how long did he train for?
15. Which year inspires his styles?
16. Who are his style icons?

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The words in bold (on the left) are all from the text. Match them up with a word on the right that can replace them in the text.

Use a dictionary to check the meanings of unfamiliar words.

Example

Competition → Contest

Now try these

Equivalent Ineffable

Trend Fashion design

Prestige Method

Indescribable Style

Elite Counterpart

Couture Zeal

Passion Reputation

Techniques Best

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Answers

1. World champion for bold colour and asymmetric
2. Hair Wizard in Weston
3. 3
4. Prestige and knowing that you have competed against the best in the world
5. Mandy and Penny Bunchombe. MANDY is a qualified motorcycle mechanic. Penny is trainee hairdresser
6. Mandy said "I am really nervous it's the world champion,. Just the little word gets you all nervous."
7. Answers can vary –
 - a. because he is now famous
 - b. because he is what she wants to be
 - c. she was annoyed because he offered to style Mandy's hair for free
8. OMC tested for technical skills and 65 countries participate
9. They choose an elite group from over a 1000 people
10. Six months. He compared his work like the 'haute couture' of hairdressing
11. "I want to prove you can be the best and come from a small town"
12. His big hair and big glasses
13. he knew he wanted to be creative and his mum encouraged him to become a hairdresser
14. Robert Hancock trained Steve for 6years
15. the 1940's inspired his styles
16. Gwen Steffani and Dita Vo Teese

B

Equivalent	Counterpart
Trend	Style
Prestige	Reputation
Indescribable	Ineffable
Elite	Best
Couture	Fashion designer
Passion	Zeal
Techniques	Method