

Today, Jim Carrey is a comedy superstar, but his younger years weren't always a laughing matter.

Jim was born and raised in Toronto, *Canada*. He grew up in a home with music and laughter. At first, Jim didn't know how to make friends, so he started "acting goofy." Soon everyone wanted to hang out with him. "Acting goofy became an entire **motivation** for living," he says. Jim was the class clown but also a straight-A student.

Then Jim's dad lost his job. The Carreys lost their home and had to live in a van for a while. Eventually, Jim, his mom, and his dad found work in a factory as caretakers.

By tenth grade, Jim no longer felt like clowning around and had little interest in school. He finally dropped out of school. There was little joy in his life. He found he really missed the laughter. So he created a comedy act and tried it out at a local club. The crowd booed him right off the stage!

Jim didn't quit, but instead continued to work the comedy **circuit** for the next 15 years. He took acting lessons, appeared in several movies, and starred in a short-lived TV sitcom called *The Duck Factory*. Jim wasn't "discovered" until he brought his wacky characters to life on the TV comedy series *In Living Color*.

Jim Carrey is now one of the highest-paid actors in Hollywood. In 1998, he earned \$20 million for his **role** in *The Truman Show*, a movie with a serious side.

Carrey continues to display his **formidable** talents in both comedies and serious movies. He even played a cartoon character. In 2000, Carrey starred in the live-action **version** of Dr. Seuss's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Of all his roles, Carrey says he most resembles Truman Burbank, his character in *The Truman Show*. "I want to be the guy who won't be caged, but still has hope and faith in people, and in life," he says.

Set Your Purpose

The road to success wasn't smooth for actor Jim Carrey. Read to find out how Jim overcame obstacles to become a highly paid actor.

Think About It

How did Jim Carrey's ability to overcome obstacles help him become successful?

Name _____ Date _____

Word Work

A **compound word** is made up of two or more shorter base words. The meaning of a compound word can often be found by combining the meaning of the two base words.

superstar = a **star** who is **superior** to other stars

Read the compound words below. Write the word that best completes each sentence. Then draw a line between the two base words.

homeowners classroom worldwide
nightclubs moviegoers

1. Jim Carrey started his comedy career in the _____.
2. Later, he lived in a van because his parents were no longer _____.
3. He performed in _____ for many years.
4. Many _____ appreciate his comic talents.

5. Carrey overcome many obstacles and now enjoys _____ fame.

Most **past-tense verbs** are formed by adding **-ed**. **Irregular verbs** change their spelling to form the past tense.

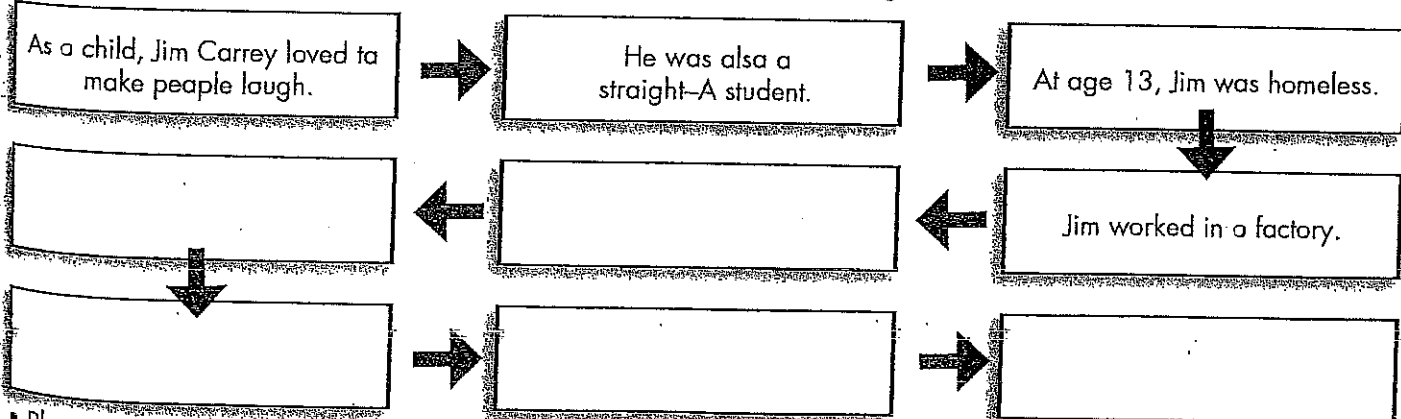
Present: Jim Carrey **makes** people laugh.
Past: Jim Carrey **made** people laugh.

Write the past tense of the verb in dark type.

6. Jim Carrey **grows** up in a home filled with music and laughter. _____
7. He **finds** that comedy helped him in school. _____
8. Do you know how Carrey **overcomes** obstacles? _____
9. Comedy **brings** out the best of his talents. _____
10. Carrey **says** he most resembles the character Truman Burbank. _____

Write Now

In the article, you read how Jim Carrey went from living in a van to becoming a famous actor.



- Plan to write a summary describing Jim Carrey's rise to fame. Complete a sequence chain like the one shown to organize your ideas.
- Write your summary, using the sequence chain to help you.

Name _____

Date _____

Check Your Understanding

Fill in the letter with the best answer for each question.

- Which one of these events happened first in Jim Carrey's life?
 - His father lost his job.
 - He dropped out of school.
 - His family lived in a van.
 - He earned \$20 million for *The Truman Show*.
- Which one of these events happened most recently?
 - He acted in the TV series *In Living Color*.
 - He starred in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.
 - He earned \$20 million for *The Truman Show*.
 - He worked the comedy circuit.
- Before Jim Carrey first tried out his comedy act in a club, he
 - played a cartoon character on film.
 - took acting lessons.
 - starred in a TV sitcom.
 - worked in a factory.
- In the 15 years before he was "discovered," Jim Carrey did not
 - take acting lessons.
 - star in a TV sitcom.
 - appear in several movies.
 - star in a Broadway show.
- Which statement best summarizes Jim Carrey's road to success?
 - Sometimes he needed help on the way up.
 - Some problems aren't really that bad.
 - He always got what he deserved.
 - He didn't let obstacles stand in his way.

Vocabulary

Find each vocabulary word in the selection. The words and sentences around it will help you figure out its meaning.

Fill in the letter with the best definition of the underlined word.

- Acting goofy became Jim Carrey's motivation for living.
 - style
 - method
 - reason
 - daily habit
- Jim Carrey worked the comedy circuit for 15 years.
 - tour
 - stage lights
 - practice sessions
 - television series
- Jim Carrey was paid \$20 million for his role in *The Truman Show*.
 - piece of bread
 - help
 - acting part
 - list of names
- Jim continues to display his formidable talents in both comedies and serious movies.
 - amusing
 - powerful
 - serious
 - average
- Jim Carrey starred in the live-action version of Dr. Seuss's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.
 - form
 - mistake
 - book
 - computer software