How "Son" became a Japanese family name

Masayoshi Son is the richest man in Japan. He's worth about US$20 billion. That's 2,173,890,000,000 yen. He is the founder of Softbank.

We are born to make things happen

Son was born in Japan. His family is of Korean decent (*zainichi Korean*). Growing up, they used the family name Yasumoto. Son went to high school in San Francisco. He went to a small university for the first two years. Then he transferred to the University of California, Berkeley. He studied computer science.

He was proud of his Korean roots. When he returned to Japan in 1981 he started using his Korean family name, Son. He wanted to be a role model for other Korean-Japanese people. He married a woman named Masami Ohno. She changed her name to Masami Son. In the late 1980's, he decided to get Japanese citizenship. But there was a problem. To become a Japanese citizen, you had to have a Japanese, family name. "Son", the government officials said, "is not a Japanese name." What makes a name Japanese? Someone who has Japanese citizenship has the name. He showed his wife's name. She is 100% Japanese. She is named Son. Masayoshi Son won the argument. He proved "Son" is a Japanese name.

❶ Work with a partner. In Japanese, talk about this story. How much do you remember?

❷ With your partner, try to tell the same story in English.

❸ Talk about names. What do the kanji in your family name mean? How would you explain it in English? Why did your parents name you your given name?

❹ **Take it deeper.** Son said, "We are born to make things happen." What does this mean to you? What are you going to make happen?

Sources:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masayoshi_Son
http://business.goldsea.com/Son/son2.html