

Who wants to be a billionaire? (Sat 12 Mar, 2005)

WARM-UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about money / Bill Gates / being a billionaire / E-Bay / Silvio Berlusconi / Martha Stewart / 21-year-old billionaire / billionaire personality / ...Change topic / partner frequently to increase conversation.

BILLIONAIRE BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'billionaire'. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

BEING A BILLIONAIRE: Talk in groups about being a billionaire. Write down five questions you would ask a real billionaire. Role play being incredibly rich. Walk around the class talking to other billionaires about your life and ask your questions (Are you a self-made billionaire? What do you do every day? Are you wonderfully happy? etc.).

2-MINUTE MONEY DEBATES: Rotate pairs to ensure a lively pace and noise level is kept:

- a. Money is the root of all evil. vs. I love money.
- b. Money can't make you happy. vs. Honestly, really, truly, it can.
- c. Rich people are stingy. vs. Many rich people are very generous.
- d. Rich people forget about their old friends. vs. That's not true.
- e. Capitalism is wonderful for giving us all a dream. vs. For most people in the world it is a nightmare.
- f. Rich people are great role models. vs. You mean Silvio Berlusconi and Martha Stewart?
- g. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves. vs. But this won't make you a billionaire.
- h. Bill Gates should give \$44bn to charity. He can survive on \$1bn. vs. He's worked hard for his money.
- i. It's great the wealth is spreading to other countries. vs. There are no African billionaires in the top 50.
- j. We can all be billionaires. vs. How?

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'annual' and 'list'.

TRUE FALSE: Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. *Forbes* magazine has released its annual list of the world's richest people. T / F
- b. Bill Gates tops the list for the twentieth straight year. T / F
- c. Bill Gates is poorer than last year. T / F
- d. Americans were ranked in the top three on the billionaire list. T / F
- e. Thirty per cent of the billionaires are women. T / F
- f. The youngest billionaire is just two years old. T / F
- g. To become a billionaire you just need brilliance and elbow grease. T / F
- h. Certain personality types are more likely to become billionaires. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| (a) released | worrying |
| (b) tops | shamed |
| (c) wealth | conceivably |
| (d) losing sleep over | genius |
| (e) unbelievably | fortune |
| (f) disgraced | hard work |
| (g) first-timers | heads |
| (h) brilliance | astonishingly |
| (i) elbow grease | newcomers |
| (j) likely | issued |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| (a) It comes as | year |
| (b) Bill Gates tops | with last year's 587 |
| (c) for the eleventh straight | it to their list |
| (d) slightly down on | the list |
| (e) he probably isn't losing | co-founders |
| (f) compared | more than "brilliance and elbow grease" |
| (g) disgraced American | sleep over this |
| (h) Google's | last year's \$46.4 billion |
| (i) it takes | businesswoman Martha Stewart |
| (j) more likely to make | no surprise |

GAP FILL

Who wants to be a billionaire?

BNE: *Forbes* magazine has released its nineteenth _____ list of the world's richest people. It comes as no surprise that Bill Gates tops the list for the eleventh _____ year. His wealth, at \$46.5 billion (\$46,500,000,000), was slightly down on last year's \$46.4 billion, although he probably isn't losing _____ over this. Second richest was American investor Warren Buffet (\$44bn), and third was India's Lakshmi Mittal (\$25bn). Other _____ rich people in the top 100 include Chelsea Football Club owner Roman Abramovich (#21), Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi (#25), E-Bay founder Pierre Omidyar (#35) and Benetton boss Luciano Benetton (#35).

Forbes said the number of billionaires increased to a record 691 this year (341 from the USA) _____ with last year's 587. Of these, 68 are women, including _____ American businesswoman Martha Stewart. The billionaires are from 45 different countries, including first-timers, Kazakhstan, Poland, Ukraine and Iceland. The youngest is Germany's Prince Albert von Turn und Taxis, who is just 21. Next are Google's co-founders Larry Page, 32, and Sergey Brin, 31. *Forbes* says it takes more than "_____ and elbow grease" to become a billionaire, and that certain personality types are more likely to make it to their list. They have an interactive quiz on their website to test if you have a billionaire _____ (www.forbes.com).

sleep annual compared personality straight disgraced brilliance unbelievably

HOMEWORK

1. VOCAB EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find information on billionaires. Share your findings with your class next lesson.

3. BILLIONAIRE ME: Write your journal / diary entry for your first day of becoming a billionaire.

4. SHOPPING LIST: Make a shopping list of how much money you will give to five different charities. Write the reasons for choosing the charities beneath the amounts.

DISCUSSION

- a. What was interesting in this article?
- b. Do you want to be a billionaire?
- c. How many billions is enough?
- d. Do you like Bill Gates?
- e. How do you feel about Martha Stewart, going to prison, and still being a billionaire?
- f. What would you do on the first day of being a billionaire?
- g. Who would you give money to?
- h. Would you be very happy forever?
- i. Can you see any problems in being so rich?
- j. Would you have any new friends?
- k. Would you keep all of your old friends?
- l. What do you think would be your biggest lifestyle change?
- m. Would you keep a close check on your spending?
- n. How rich do you want to be?
- o. Would you be an extravagant or careful spender?
- p. Would you still look after the pennies?
- q. Do you respect billionaires?
- r. Are billionaires generous people?
- s. Do you like looking at “top-100”, or “top-10” lists?
- t. Do you lose sleep over money?
- u. What does it take to be a billionaire?
- v. Do you have what it takes to be a billionaire?
- w. How much cash would you keep in your wallet when you go out?
- x. Would you work?
- y. How would you help people?
- z. What would you invest in?

TEXT

Who wants to be a billionaire?

BNE: *Forbes* magazine has released its nineteenth **annual** list of the world’s richest people. It comes as no surprise that Bill Gates tops the list for the eleventh **straight** year. His wealth, at \$46.5 billion (\$46,500,000,000), was slightly down on last year’s \$46.4 billion, although he probably isn’t losing **sleep** over this. Second richest was American investor Warren Buffet (\$44bn), and third was India’s Lakshmi Mittal (\$25bn). Other **unbelievably** rich people in the top 100 include Chelsea Football Club owner Roman Abramovich (#21), Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi (#25), E-Bay founder Pierre Omidyar (#35) and Benetton boss Luciano Benetton (#35).

Forbes said the number of billionaires increased to a record 691 this year (341 from the USA) **compared** with last year's 587. Of these, 68 are women, including **disgraced** American businesswoman Martha Stewart. The billionaires are from 45 different countries, including first-timers, Kazakhstan, Poland, Ukraine and Iceland. The youngest is Germany’s Prince Albert von Turn und Taxis, who is just 21. Next are Google’s co-founders Larry Page, 32, and Sergey Brin, 31. *Forbes* says it takes more than “**brilliance** and elbow grease” to become a billionaire, and that certain personality types are more likely to make it to their list. They have an interactive quiz on their website to test if you have a billionaire **personality** (www.forbes.com).