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Ahmadinejad wins Iranian presidency

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26 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Ahmadinejad wins Iranian presidency

BNE: In Iran, Tehran's mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has won a landslide victory in the presidential election. The new president was almost unknown outside of the capital city two weeks ago. Few people thought he could win this election. However, he was voted into power with 61 per cent of the votes. Voter turnout was around 60 per cent. The key to his victory was the poor and working class people. He promised to share Iran's oil wealth with them, which made him very popular. His presidency will start after his inauguration ceremony in August.

Mr. Ahmadinejad has asked Iranians to forget their differences and unite. He wants to make Iran a "modern, advanced and Islamic" nation. He said: "Today is a day when we have to forget all our rivalries and turn them into friendships." He will certainly add new tensions on the world's political stage. He strongly believes Iran has the right to develop nuclear weapons. This is sure to upset the United States. George W. Bush famously said Iran was part of an axis of evil. That was when Iran's leader was the moderate Mohammad Khatami. Mr. Ahmadinejad is certain to steer Iran into the unknown.

WARM-UPS

1. DIFFERENCES: Iran's new leader Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has asked his people to forget their differences and join together. In pairs / groups, talk about the differences among people in your country. The following table might help:

- North / South divide
- Religious differences
- Racial differences
- Class differences
- Language differences
- Other
- Haves and have-nots
- Ethnic backgrounds
- Educational differences
- Class differences
- Differences between men and women

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Iran / Tehran / elections / Mahmoud Ahmadinejad / voting / Islamic laws / putting aside differences / rivalries / nuclear weapons / axis of evil / the unknown

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. IRAN: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Iran. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. IRAN OPINIONS: To what degree do you agree or disagree with these opinions? Change the statements so they match your own opinions and provide support for any changes you make.

- a. Iran is a truly democratic country.
- b. There is no reason why Iran should not develop nuclear weapons.
- c. Iran belongs to the axis of evil.
- d. Iran has a lot to offer the world.
- e. The recent election result will make the region unstable.
- f. President George W. Bush should immediately invite Mr. Ahmadinejad to his Texas ranch.
- g. Sharing a nation's oil revenues among its poor people should be copied by all oil-producing countries.
- h. The world is a more uncertain place after Mr. Ahmadinejad's election victory.
- i. Mr. Ahmadinejad will turn Iran's international rivalries into friendships.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The Iranian election was very close. | T / F |
| b. The election winner is very well known across the globe. | T / F |
| c. The poor and working class voted Mr. Ahmadinejad to power. | T / F |
| d. Mr. Ahmadinejad will give oil money to poor people. | T / F |
| e. Mr. Ahmadinejad asked Iranians to forget their differences. | T / F |
| f. Mr. Ahmadinejad wants to modernize Iran. | T / F |
| g. Mr. Ahmadinejad wants to stop Iran's nuclear programs. | T / F |
| h. Iran is about to embark on a journey into the unknown. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| a. landslide | join together |
| b. unknown | riches |
| c. key | middle-of-the-road |
| d. promised | hostilities |
| e. wealth | vowed |
| f. unite | overwhelming |
| g. rivalries | guide |
| h. tensions | secret |
| i. moderate | struggles |
| j. steer | obscure |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. won a landslide | class people |
| b. presidential | ceremony |
| c. voter | evil |
| d. poor and working | develop nuclear weapons |
| e. inauguration | the world's political stage |
| f. forget their differences | victory |
| g. add new tensions on | turnout |
| h. Iran has the right to | the unknown |
| i. axis of | and unite |
| j. steer Iran into | election |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

Ahmadinejad wins Iranian presidency

BNE: In Iran, Tehran's mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has won a _____ victory in the presidential election. The new president was almost _____ outside of the capital city two weeks ago. Few people thought he could _____ this election. However, he was voted into _____ with 61 per cent of the votes. Voter _____ was around 60 per cent. The _____ to his victory was the poor and working class people. He promised to share Iran's oil _____ with them, which made him very _____. His presidency will start after his inauguration ceremony in August.

unknown
wealth
power
landslide
key
win
popular
turnout

Mr. Ahmadinejad has asked Iranians to _____ their differences and _____. He wants to make Iran a "modern, _____ and Islamic" nation. He said: "Today is a day when we have to forget all our _____ and turn them into friendships." He will certainly add new _____ on the world's political stage. He strongly believes Iran has the right to develop nuclear weapons. This is sure to _____ the United States. George W. Bush famously said Iran was part of an axis of evil. That was when Iran's leader was the _____ Mohammad Khatami. Mr. Ahmadinejad is certain to _____ Iran into the unknown.

upset
unite
steer
rivalries
moderate
forget
tensions
advanced

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'land' and 'slide'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT IRAN SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about Iran, the Middle East and relations with the U.S.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- landslide
- unknown
- few
- turnout
- key
- popular
- differences
- advanced
- rivalries
- tensions
- upset
- steer

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the story?
- c. Are you interested in Iranian politics?
- d. What do you know about Iran?
- e. Would you like to know more about Iran?
- f. Do you think Iran is a part of the "axis of evil"?
- g. What do you think about Iran having stricter Islamic laws?
- h. Do you think Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and George W. Bush will be good friends?
- i. Would it have been better if Mr. Rafsanjani had won the election?
- j. What unknown places will Iran go to?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What is your opinion on Mr. Ahmadinejad's election victory?
- d. Do you think Mr. Ahmadinejad will modernize Iran?
- e. What do you think of his promise to share Iran's oil money with the poor?
- f. Should Iran be allowed to develop nuclear weapons?
- g. How would an Iran with nuclear weapons affect the region?
- h. What should George W. Bush do if Iran goes ahead with its nuclear weapons program?
- i. Is Iran a good model of democracy for other Islamic nations?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

FORGETTING DIFFERENCES: In pairs / groups, decide how the problems of the world can be solved if nations forget their differences. What needs to be done to turn rivalries into friendships. Talk about the likelihood of this happening. Walk around the class and interview many students to add to the information in your table.

WORLD RIVALRIES	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	LIKELIHOOD OF FRIENDSHIP
Iran / USA		
N.Korea / S. Korea		
Israel / Palestine		
India / Pakistan		
Your idea		

Return to your original partners and compare your findings. Which of the rivalries is most dangerous? Which rivalry will turn into friendship the quickest?

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Ahmadinejad wins Iranian presidency

B N E: In Iran, Tehran's mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has _____ victory in the presidential election. The new president was _____ outside of the capital city two weeks ago. Few people thought he could win this election. However, he was _____ with 61 per cent of the votes. Voter turnout was around 60 per cent. The _____ was the poor and _____. He promised to share Iran's _____ with them, which made him very popular. His presidency will start after his _____ in August.

Mr. Ahmadinejad has asked Iranians to _____ and unite. He wants to make Iran a "modern, advanced and Islamic" nation. He said: "Today is a day when we have to _____ and turn them into friendships." He will certainly _____ on the world's political stage. He strongly believes Iran _____ to develop nuclear weapons. This is _____ the United States. George W. Bush famously said Iran was part of an axis of evil. That was when Iran's leader _____ Mohammad Khatami. Mr. Ahmadinejad is _____ Iran into the unknown.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY 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 more information on Iran's president-elect Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. RIVALRIES: Write an essay explaining the rivalries your country has. What needs to be done to turn the rivalries into greater friendship? Explain these rivalries to your classmates in your next lesson. Did everyone write about similar things?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Congratulate him on his election victory. Give him advice on what he should do during his presidency. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all give similar advice?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. F c. T d. T e. T f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. landslide	overwhelming
b. unknown	obscure
c. key	secret
d. promised	vowed
e. wealth	riches
f. unite	join together
g. rivalries	struggles
h. tensions	hostilities
i. moderate	middle-of-the-road
j. steer	guide

PHRASE MATCH:

a. won a landslide	victory
b. presidential	election
c. voter	turnout
d. poor and working	class people
e. inauguration	ceremony
f. forget their differences	and unite
g. add new tensions on	the world's political stage
h. Iran has the right to	develop nuclear weapons
i. axis of	evil
j. steer Iran into	the unknown

GAP FILL:

Ahmadinejad wins Iranian presidency

BNE: In Iran, Tehran's mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has won a **landslide** victory in the presidential election. The new president was almost **unknown** outside of the capital city two weeks ago. Few people thought he could **win** this election. However, he was voted into **power** with 61 per cent of the votes. Voter **turnout** was around 60 per cent. The **key** to his victory was the poor and working class people. He promised to share Iran's oil **wealth** with them, which made him very **popular**. His presidency will start after his inauguration ceremony in August.

Mr. Ahmadinejad has asked Iranians to **forget** their differences and **unite**. He wants to make Iran a "modern, **advanced** and Islamic" nation. He said: "Today is a day when we have to forget all our **rivalries** and turn them into friendships." He will certainly add new **tensions** on the world's political stage. He strongly believes Iran has the right to develop nuclear weapons. This is sure to **upset** the United States. George W. Bush famously said Iran was part of an axis of evil. That was when Iran's leader was the **moderate** Mohammad Khatami. Mr. Ahmadinejad is certain to **steer** Iran into the unknown.