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## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”

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## **“Podcast” is 2005 Word of the Year**

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**8 December, 2005**

## THE ARTICLE

### **"Podcast" is 2005 Word of the Year**

The editors of the *New Oxford American Dictionary* have chosen "podcast" as the Word of the Year for 2005. It has the official definition: "A digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program, made available on the Internet for downloading to a personal audio player." The word comes from joining "broadcasting" and "iPod". However, the term is a little misleading as Apple Computers, which makes the iPod, had little to do with the original podcasting technology. Oxford's editor-in-chief Erin McKean said: "The word has finally caught up with the rest of the iPod phenomenon."

McKean has the almost impossible task of choosing the word of the year. She said: "It is incredibly difficult....We look at everything from blogs to technical journals to suggestions sent to [our website]....Everyone has such strong opinions about what makes a word Word of the Year material....I'm surprised nobody tried to bribe me - except that the only thing I really want is more cool new words." Runners-up for the 2005 Word of the Year include "bird flu" (a deadly virus carried by wild birds), "sudoku" (a Japanese numerical puzzle) and "squick" (to cause immediate and total disgust).

## WARM-UPS

**1. I'M A WORD:** You are now a word. Write down the word that you want to be. Talk to the other "words" in the class about your life. What do you like about yourself? Do you like your spelling? Do you like the way people pronounce you? Are you a useful word? Do you have any words you don't get along with? What are your plans for the weekend?

**2. MY FAVORITE WORDS:** Write down three English words you really like and three you dislike. Talk about these with your partner(s). Repeat this activity using three words from your own language you like and dislike.

**3. OUR ENGLISH WORDS:** In pairs / groups, make a list of the English words that are a part of your own language. Discuss whether you like these words being part of your language. Have any words from your language become part of the English language? Which words from your language do you think should be used internationally?

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

*Editors / dictionaries / podcasts / words / personal audio players / the Internet / the Apple iPod / Word of the Year / blogs / bribery / bird flu / sudoku / disgust*

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

**5. NEW WORD OPINIONS:** Do you agree with these opinions on new words? Talk about them with your partners.

- Young and old people don't understand each other because they use different vocabularies.
- It's getting harder and harder to understand new words.
- I love new words, especially the geeky ones.
- I think it's better to learn traditional vocabulary. New words come and go.
- I wish they'd stop inventing new words. It's already difficult trying to learn the old ones.
- It's great that English takes so many words from other languages.
- You have to be a computer geek to understand new words.
- There should be a strict rules about the creation of new words.

**6. PODCAST:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "podcast". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**7. QUICK DEBATE:** Have a quick debate with your partner about the word "podcast". Students A think "podcast" is the best term, Students B think "blogcast" or "audioblog" are better.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. Apple Computer has said "Podcast" is the word of the year for 2005. T / F
- b. A podcast is an analog recording of a radio broadcast put on the Web. T / F
- c. "Podcast" is a combination of "iPod" and "podcast". T / F
- d. Apple was not the main developer of podcasting technology. T / F
- e. A dictionary editor said choosing 2005's word of the year was easy. T / F
- f. People have no opinions about what makes a word Word of the Year. T / F
- g. People offered bribes to the *Oxford English Dictionary* editor-in-chief. T / F
- h. "Sudoku" is a Japanese logic-based numbers puzzle. T / F

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

- |               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| a. chosen     | word      |
| b. joining    | absolute  |
| c. term       | sensation |
| d. original   | views     |
| e. phenomenon | extremely |
| f. task       | initial   |
| g. incredibly | selected  |
| h. opinions   | lethal    |
| i. deadly     | combining |
| j. total      | job       |

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

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| a. A digital recording of a radio broadcast | choosing the word of the year        |
| b. made available                           | "broadcasting" and "iPod"            |
| c. The word comes from joining              | by wild birds                        |
| d. the term is a little                     | with the rest of the iPod phenomenon |
| e. The word has finally caught up           | Word of the Year                     |
| f. the almost impossible task of            | or similar program                   |
| g. We look at everything from blogs         | misleading                           |
| h. opinions about what makes a word         | more cool new words                  |
| i. the only thing I really want is          | to technical journals                |
| j. a deadly virus carried                   | on the Internet for downloading      |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

### "Podcast" is 2005 Word of the Year

The \_\_\_\_\_ of the *New Oxford American Dictionary* have chosen "podcast" as the Word of the Year for 2005. It has the \_\_\_\_\_ definition: "A digital recording of a radio \_\_\_\_\_ or similar program, made available on the Internet for downloading to a \_\_\_\_\_ audio player." The word comes from \_\_\_\_\_ "broadcasting" and "iPod". However, the \_\_\_\_\_ is a little misleading as Apple Computers, which makes the iPod, had \_\_\_\_\_ to do with the original podcasting technology. Oxford's editor-in-chief Erin McKean said: "The word has finally \_\_\_\_\_ up with the rest of the iPod phenomenon."

*joining*  
*broadcast*  
*caught*  
*editors*  
*little*  
*official*  
*personal*  
*term*

McKean has the \_\_\_\_\_ impossible task of choosing the word of the year. She said: "It is \_\_\_\_\_ difficult....We look at \_\_\_\_\_ from blogs to technical journals to suggestions sent to [our website].... \_\_\_\_\_ has such strong opinions about what makes a word Word of the Year material....I'm \_\_\_\_\_ nobody tried to bribe me - except that the only thing I really want is more \_\_\_\_\_ new words." Runners-up for the 2005 Word of the Year include "bird flu" (a deadly virus carried by wild birds), "sudoku" (a Japanese \_\_\_\_\_ puzzle) and "squick" (to \_\_\_\_\_ immediate and total disgust).

*numerical*  
*incredibly*  
*everyone*  
*cool*  
*almost*  
*cause*  
*everything*  
*surprised*

"Podcast" is 2005 Word of the Year – 8 December, 2005

## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### "Podcast" is 2005 Word of the Year

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McKean has the almost \_\_\_\_\_ task of choosing the word of the year. She said: "It is \_\_\_\_\_ difficult....We look at everything from blogs to technical \_\_\_\_\_ to suggestions sent to [our website]....Everyone has such strong opinions about what makes a word Word of the Year \_\_\_\_\_....I'm surprised nobody tried to \_\_\_\_\_ me - except that the only thing I really want is more cool new words." Runners-up for the 2005 Word of the Year include "bird flu" (a deadly \_\_\_\_\_ carried by wild birds), "sudoku" (a Japanese numerical puzzle) and "squick" (to cause immediate and \_\_\_\_\_ disgust).

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 activity. 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 "POCAST" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about podcasts and new technology.

- 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:

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| • editors   | • impossible |
| • official  | • journals   |
| • available | • strong     |
| • joining   | • bribe      |
| • original  | • runners-up |
| • caught up | • total      |

## DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Do you think the Word of the Year is a good idea?
- c. What would be word of the year in your language?
- d. How interested are you in English vocabulary and your own language's vocabulary?
- e. What do you think of the word "podcast"?
- f. Do you like spending a long time looking at dictionaries?
- g. Do you ever make your own words – either in English or your own language?
- h. Do you think it is unfair that Apple is strongly linked to podcasts, even though it didn't invent the technology?
- i. Do you ever worry that you can't keep up to date with new words?
- j. Do you download and listen to podcasts?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you have strong opinions about words?
- d. What do you think makes a word Word of the Year?
- e. What do you think of the idea of podcasts?
- f. Would you like to make your own podcasts?
- g. What do you think of the new word "squick"?
- h. What "cool" words or slang do you use in your language, which, perhaps, are not in the dictionary?
- i. What do you think is the word of the century?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



## SPEAKING

**THE RUNNERS-UP:** Match the runners-up for Word of the Year 2005 with their definitions.

1. IDP (internally displaced person)	a. A better or easier way of doing an everyday task.
2. IED (improvised explosive device)	b. A logic-based puzzle containing squares that form grids within a grid.
3. lifehack	c. Software installed on a computer by someone who is not the computer's owner, to hide other programs, files or data.
4. persistent vegetative state	d. Cause immediate and total disgust.
5. reggaeton	e. Someone forced to move within a country because of a natural disaster or war.
6. rootkit	f. A Latin American dance music which combines reggae music with hip-hop and rap.
7. squick	g. A homemade bomb.
8. sudoku	h. A medical condition in which a patient recovering from a coma may look like they are awake, but is not able to move, talk or respond.

- In pairs / groups, talk about which of the words you like and don't like.
- Agree on a ranking in order of which words should stay in the English language.
- Change partners and compare and explain your rankings.
- Write down eight questions using all of the above words (one of the words in each question).
- Change partners again and ask your questions.

## **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 podcasts. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**3. MY WORDS:** Make a poster with the top five possibilities for word of the year in your own language. Include full explanations in English of the meaning of the words and why they are on the top five list. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Ask your partners to rank the words.

**4. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE:** Write a newspaper article using all of the words that were runners-up as Word of the Year 2005 (see "Speaking" section). The story can be on any subject. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. How different were your stories?

"Podcast" is 2005 Word of the Year – 8 December, 2005

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. chosen	selected
b. joining	combining
c. term	word
d. original	initial
e. phenomenon	sensation
f. task	job
g. incredibly	extremely
h. opinions	views
i. deadly	lethal
j. total	absolute

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. A digital recording of a radio broadcast	or similar program
b. made available	on the Internet for downloading
c. The word comes from joining	"broadcasting" and "iPod"
d. the term is a little	misleading
e. The word has finally caught up	with the rest of the iPod phenomenon
f. the almost impossible task of	choosing the word of the year
g. We look at everything from blogs	to technical journals
h. opinions about what makes a word	Word of the Year
i. the only thing I really want is	more cool new words
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### GAP FILL:

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### THE RUNNERS-UP:

1. e      2. g      3. a      4. h      5. f      6. c      7. d      8. b

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