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Barack Obama's supercar shown to the world

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16th January, 2009

THE ARTICLE

The maker of Barack Obama's presidential car showed it to the world on Wednesday. Car giant Cadillac allowed photographers to take photos of the new limousine, that could belong to a spy movie. The world's press could only take shots of the outside of the vehicle. Everything inside is top secret, although Cadillac has said it has all the very latest equipment. The limo has the nickname "The Beast" because of its weight, size and power. It is probably the most heavily armoured car ever made. Cadillac is keeping details of how well-protected the car is a big secret. Special Secret Service drivers will chauffeur President Obama around on his official appointments. The car will even go on foreign tours with the president.

"The Beast" will make its debut on the 20th of January. This is when Barack Obama becomes president. It is a tradition for the new presidential car to be part of the inauguration parade. America's Secret Service told reporters the car would be a "valuable asset" in protecting the new president. Spokesman Nicholas Trotta boasted: "Although many of the vehicle's security [details] cannot be discussed, it is safe to say that this car's security and coded communications systems make it the most technologically advanced protection vehicle in the world." Another spokesman explained the secrecy to the BBC, saying: "One of the specifications is that we don't talk about the specifications."

WARM-UPS

1. BARACK OBAMA: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Barack Obama. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

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

car makers / presidential cars / limousines / spy movies / big secrets / foreign tours / debuts / traditions / inaugurations / parades / communication systems / protection

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. PROTECTION: What does Barack Obama need to stay safe? Complete the table below with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote.

Things	Special security measures	Why?
car		
telephone		
bodyguards		
e-mail		
airplane		
other _____		

4. "THE BEAST": Students A **strongly** believe Barack Obama should have chosen an eco-friendly car that is light and fuel-efficient; Students B **strongly** believe President Obama's safety is a million times more important than the environment. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. SECRET STUFF: What is important for a Secret Service presidential car? Rank these things with your partner(s). Change partners and talk about your rankings.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| _____ speed | _____ the colour |
| _____ missile launchers | _____ a place for the pet dog |
| _____ ability to go across rivers | _____ bulletproof glass |
| _____ iPod connection on the back seat | _____ eco-friendliness |

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

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Barack Obama now has the world's fastest sports car. | T / F |
| b. The car is exactly the same as one seen in a recent spy movie. | T / F |
| c. The car's nickname is "The Beauty" because of its lovely curves. | T / F |
| d. The car will go overseas with Obama when he goes on foreign trips. | T / F |
| e. U.S. Presidents show off their new cars on their first day as president. | T / F |
| f. A security spokesman said details of the car's security will be online. | T / F |
| g. There are other cars that offer better protection to passengers. | T / F |
| h. A spokesman said there were specifications about specifications. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. maker | a. stuff |
| 2. allowed | b. confidentiality |
| 3. shots | c. let |
| 4. equipment | d. details |
| 5. chauffeur | e. photographs |
| 6. debut | f. modern |
| 7. asset | g. manufacturer |
| 8. advanced | h. driver |
| 9. secrecy | i. premiere |
| 10. specifications | j. resource |

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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. take photos | a. armoured car ever made |
| 2. it has all the very | b. asset |
| 3. the most heavily | c. tours with the president |
| 4. drivers will chauffeur | d. parade |
| 5. The car will even go on foreign | e. of the new limousine |
| 6. "The Beast" will make its debut | f. about the specifications |
| 7. part of the inauguration | g. advanced |
| 8. a valuable | h. President Obama around |
| 9. technologically | i. latest equipment |
| 10. we don't talk | j. on the 20th of January |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The _____ of Barack Obama's presidential car showed it to the world on Wednesday. Car giant Cadillac _____ photographers to take photos of the new limousine, that could belong to a spy movie. The world's press could only take _____ of the outside of the vehicle. Everything inside is top secret, although Cadillac has said it has all the very _____ equipment. The limo has the nickname "The Beast" because of its weight, size and power. It is probably the most _____ armoured car ever made. Cadillac is keeping details of how well protected the car is a _____ secret. Special Secret Service drivers will _____ President Obama around on his official appointments. The car will even go on _____ tours with the president.

big
shots
foreign
latest
maker
chauffeur
allowed
heavily

"The Beast" will make its _____ on the 20th of January. This is when Barack Obama becomes president. It is a _____ for the new presidential car to be part of the inauguration _____. America's Secret Service told reporters the car would be a "_____ asset" in protecting the new president. Spokesman Nicholas Trotta boasted: "Although many of the vehicle's security [details] cannot be _____, it is safe to say that this car's security and coded communications systems make it the _____ technologically advanced protection vehicle in the world." Another spokesman explained the _____ to the BBC, saying: "One of the specifications is that we don't _____ about the specifications."

discussed
parade
secrecy
debut
valuable
most
tradition
talk

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The maker of Barack Obama's presidential car showed _____ Wednesday. Car giant Cadillac allowed photographers to take photos of the new limousine, _____ a spy movie. The world's press could only take shots of the outside of the vehicle. Everything inside is top secret, although Cadillac _____ the very latest equipment. The limo has the nickname "The Beast" because of its weight, _____. It is probably the most heavily armoured car ever made. Cadillac is keeping details of how well-_____ a big secret. Special Secret Service drivers will chauffeur President Obama around on his official appointments. The car _____ foreign tours with the president.

"The Beast" will make _____ 20th of January. This is when Barack Obama becomes president. It is a tradition for the new presidential _____ the inauguration parade. America's Secret Service told reporters the car would be a "valuable asset" _____ new president. Spokesman Nicholas Trotta boasted: "Although many of the vehicle's security [details] cannot be discussed, _____ that this car's _____ communications systems make it the most technologically advanced protection vehicle in the world." Another spokesman explained the secrecy to the BBC, saying: "One of the specifications _____ talk about the specifications."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

secret	service
---------------	----------------

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• showed• spy• latest• power• details• tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• debut• parade• asset• safe• advanced• talk
---	---

STUDENT PRESIDENTIAL LIMO SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about a presidential limo in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

OBAMA & HIS CAR DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'limousine'?
- c) Would you like to go for a drive in Barack Obama's new car?
- d) What kind of top secret stuff do you think the car has?
- e) Do you think the car should be very eco-friendly?
- f) Do you think the car needs to be so heavily armoured?
- g) What kind of training do you think Secret Service chauffeurs have?
- h) Barack Obama is being called "president of the world". Do you think this is a good name for him?
- i) What kind of president do you think Obama will be?

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OBAMA & HIS CAR DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) How will / do you without George W. Bush in power?
- c) Do you like looking at presidential inaugurations?
- d) What kinds of threats on his life do you think Barack Obama might face?
- e) What would you like Barack Obama to do first?
- f) Do you believe Obama will make a difference?
- g) What technology would you like to see in your car?
- h) Will you go to hear him speak if he visits your country?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Barack Obama?

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LANGUAGE

The maker of Barack Obama's presidential car (1) _____ it to the world on Wednesday. Car giant Cadillac allowed photographers to take photos of the new limousine, that could (2) _____ to a spy movie. The world's press could only take (3) _____ of the outside of the vehicle. Everything inside is top secret, although Cadillac has said it has all the very latest equipment. The limo has the nickname "The Beast" because of its (4) _____, size and power. It is probably the most heavily armoured car ever made. Cadillac is (5) _____ details of how well-protected the car is a big secret. Special Secret Service drivers will chauffeur President Obama around (6) _____ his official appointments. The car will even go on foreign tours with the president.

"The Beast" will make its debut on the 20th of January. This is when Barack Obama becomes president. It is a tradition (7) _____ the new presidential car to be part of the inauguration parade. America's Secret Service told reporters the car would be a "(8) _____ asset" in protecting the new president. Spokesman Nicholas Trotta boasted: "Although many of the vehicle's security [details] cannot be discussed, it is (9) _____ to say that this car's (10) _____ and coded communications systems make it the most technologically advanced protection vehicle in the world." Another spokesman explained the (11) _____ to the BBC, saying: "One of the specifications (12) _____ that we don't talk about the specifications."

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. | (a) shows | (b) shown | (c) showing | (d) showed |
| 2. | (a) belonging | (b) belonged | (c) belong | (d) belongs |
| 3. | (a) shooting | (b) shots | (c) shoots | (d) shoot |
| 4. | (a) weight | (b) weigh | (c) weighing | (d) weighs |
| 5. | (a) keeps | (b) kept | (c) keeping | (d) keeper |
| 6. | (a) up to | (b) of | (c) from | (d) on |
| 7. | (a) at | (b) for | (c) from | (d) with |
| 8. | (a) valuable | (b) valuation | (c) values | (d) valued |
| 9. | (a) safety | (b) safe | (c) safes | (d) save |
| 10. | (a) secure | (b) secures | (c) security | (d) secured |
| 11. | (a) secrecy | (b) secret | (c) secrets | (d) secrete |
| 12. | (a) were | (b) be | (c) was | (d) is |

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 out more about "The Beast". Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. SUPERCAR: Make a poster about a presidential car. Explain all of the top-secret features. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. SPECIFICATIONS: Write a magazine article about "The Beast". Describe what equipment is inside.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. SAFE: Write an imaginary conversation between the designer of the car and Barack Obama. The president starts by telling the designer what he wants.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s). Role play your conversation in front of the class.

6. LETTER: Write a letter to Cadillac. Ask them three questions about the impact of "The Beast" on the environment. Give them three suggestions on how to make it more environmentally friendly. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. maker | a. manufacturer |
| 2. allowed | b. let |
| 3. shots | c. photographs |
| 4. equipment | d. stuff |
| 5. chauffeur | e. driver |
| 6. debut | f. premiere |
| 7. asset | g. resource |
| 8. advanced | h. modern |
| 9. secrecy | i. confidentiality |
| 10. specifications | j. details |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. take photos | a. of the new limousine |
| 2. it has all the very | b. latest equipment |
| 3. the most heavily | c. armoured car ever made |
| 4. drivers will chauffeur | d. President Obama around |
| 5. The car will even go on foreign | e. tours with the president |
| 6. "The Beast" will make its debut | f. on the 20th of January |
| 7. part of the inauguration | g. parade |
| 8. a valuable | h. asset |
| 9. technologically | i. advanced |
| 10. we don't talk | j. about the specifications |

GAP FILL:

Barack Obama's supercar shown to the world

The **maker** of Barack Obama's presidential car showed it to the world on Wednesday. Car giant Cadillac **allowed** photographers to take photos of the new limousine, that could belong to a spy movie. The world's press could only take **shots** of the outside of the vehicle. Everything inside is top secret, although Cadillac has said it has all the very **latest** equipment. The limo has the nickname "The Beast" because of its weight, size and power. It is probably the most **heavily** armoured car ever made. Cadillac is keeping details of how well-protected the car is a **big** secret. Special Secret Service drivers will **chauffeur** President Obama around on his official appointments. The car will even go on **foreign** tours with the president.

"The Beast" will make its **debut** on the 20th of January. This is when Barack Obama becomes president. It is a **tradition** for the new presidential car to be part of the inauguration **parade**. America's Secret Service told reporters the car would be a "**valuable** asset" in protecting the new president. Spokesman Nicholas Trotta boasted: "Although many of the vehicle's security [details] cannot be **discussed**, it is safe to say that this car's security and coded communications systems make it the **most** technologically advanced protection vehicle in the world." Another spokesman explained the **secrecy** to the BBC, saying: "One of the specifications is that we don't **talk** about the specifications."

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - c 3 - b 4 - a 5 - c 6 - d 7 - b 8 - a 9 - b 10 - c 11 - a 12 - d