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Russia issues 5,000-rouble note

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2 August, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Russia issues 5,000-rouble note

Russia put a 5,000-rouble banknote back into its money supply on July 31st. The new note was introduced because Russian people are becoming richer. Russia's Central Bank said that the bill was not to stop inflation. The last time Russia had a 5,000-rouble note was in 1998 - the year the rouble crashed. At that time, high inflation brought great trouble to the economy. The government said it was necessary to have high value notes because of the "growth of average incomes in the country". The Russian rouble is currently very strong because of Russia's status as an energy superpower. It is the world's second largest oil producer. Russia now has so much money that it agreed to repay all of the Soviet-era debt of £12.5bn it owed to other countries.

The Siberian News Agency reports Russia's government has tried hard to protect the new note from being copied. The note's design includes many special, high-tech features that allow banks and stores to check if a banknote is real and not fake. The bill has hidden rainbow stripes, which look gray from a different angle. Holding up the banknote to the light, one can see the number 5,000 formed by lots of small holes. The Central Bank has launched a competition to find a "catchy" symbol for its currency. Opinion polls suggest Russians like the Latin letter "R" with two lines running through the center. The new note gives Russia a currency to match its superpower status. Other big-money bills include the US's 100 dollars, the 500 euros and the UAE's 1,000 dirhams.

WARM-UPS

1. MY CURRENCY: With your partner(s), talk and tell each other about the currency of your country. When you have finished, find a new partner and report on what you talked about.

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

Banknote / money / becoming richer / inflation / incomes / energy / superpowers / design / banks / rainbows / stripes / symbols / 5,000 / opinion polls / Latin

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

3. WORLD CURRENCIES: With your partner(s), talk about these currencies. What things spring to mind when you think of each currency? Change partner(s) and share what you talked about.

- US dollar
- Euro
- British pound
- Japanese yen
- Chinese yuan
- Indian rupee
- Russian rouble
- Other _____

4. QUICK DEBATE: Students A believe cash is no good and credit cards or e-money are better. Students B believe cash is the best and should never be replaced by credit cards or e-money. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

5. OPINIONS: With your partner(s), talk about the following opinions on the rouble and other currencies. Change partners and share your findings.

- a. It is too risky to invest in the Russian rouble.
- b. One day there should only be one currency in the world.
- c. It is too dangerous to have banknotes with a very high value.
- d. Copying high value banknotes is now very easy.
- e. Russians will soon be among the richest people in the world.
- f. The rouble will be replaced by the Euro in the future.
- g. Most Russians will never get a 5,000-rouble note.
- h. The rouble will soon be as strong as the US dollar.

6. BANKNOTE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'banknote'. 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. The 5,000-rouble note is to control inflation. | T / F |
| b. It is the first time Russia has had such a high value banknote. | T / F |
| c. Russia's currency is currently very weak. | T / F |
| d. Russia recently agreed to pay off all of a \$12.5 Soviet-era debt. | T / F |
| e. The new banknote contains no high-tech features. | T / F |
| f. The bill has hidden rainbow stripes that glow in the dark. | T / F |
| g. The bill has the number 5,000 formed by lots of small-diameter holes. | T / F |
| h. A competition will decide on a new symbol for the rouble. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a. banknote | be equal to |
| b. richer | increase |
| c. trouble | characteristics |
| d. growth | position |
| e. status | wealthier |
| f. protect | memorable |
| g. features | bill |
| h. launched | safeguard |
| i. catchy | difficulty |
| j. match | started |

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. money | from being copied |
| b. high inflation brought great | largest oil producer |
| c. the growth of average | the center |
| d. It is the world's second | symbol for its currency |
| e. the Soviet-era debt of £12.5bn | incomes |
| f. tried hard to protect the new note | its superpower status |
| g. check if a banknote is real | supply |
| h. find a "catchy" | trouble to the economy |
| i. two lines running through | it owed to other countries |
| j. ...gives Russia a currency to match | and not fake |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Russia issues 5,000-rouble note

Russia put a 5,000-rouble banknote _____ into its money supply on July 31st. The new note was introduced because Russian people are becoming _____. Russia's Central Bank said that the bill was not to stop inflation. The last time Russia had a 5,000-rouble note was in 1998 - the year the rouble _____. At that _____, high inflation brought great trouble to the economy. The government said it was necessary to have high value notes because of the "_____ of average incomes in the country". The Russian rouble is currently very strong because of Russia's _____ as an energy superpower. It is the world's second largest oil producer. Russia now has so much money that it agreed to _____ all of the Soviet-era debt of £12.5bn it _____ to other countries.

growth
richer
owed
time
repay
back
status
crashed

The Siberian News Agency reports Russia's government has tried hard to _____ the new note from being copied. The note's design includes many special, high-tech _____ that allow banks and stores to check if a banknote is real and not fake. The bill has hidden rainbow _____, which look gray from a different angle. Holding up the banknote to the _____, one can see the number 5,000 formed by lots of small _____. The Central Bank has launched a competition to find a "catchy" _____ for its currency. Opinion polls suggest Russians like the Latin letter "R" with two _____ running through the center. The new note gives Russia a currency to match its superpower status. Other big-money bills _____ the US's 100 dollars, the 500 euros and the UAE's 1,000 dirhams.

holes
features
include
light
protect
symbol
stripes
lines

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LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Russia issues 5,000-rouble note

Russia put a 5,000-rouble banknote back into its _____ on July 31st. The new note was introduced because Russian people are becoming richer. Russia's Central Bank said that the bill was not to stop _____. The last time Russia had a 5,000-rouble note was in 1998 - the year the rouble crashed. At that time, high inflation _____ great trouble to the economy. The government said it was necessary to have high value notes because of the "growth of _____ incomes in the country". The Russian rouble is currently very strong because of Russia's _____ as an energy superpower. It is the world's second largest oil producer. Russia now has so much money that it agreed to _____ all of the Soviet-era debt of £12.5bn it owed to other countries.

The Siberian News Agency reports Russia's government has _____ to protect the new note from being copied. The note's design includes many special, high-tech _____ that allow banks and stores to check if a banknote is real and not _____. The bill has hidden rainbow stripes, which look gray from a different _____. Holding up the banknote to the light, one can see the number 5,000 _____ by lots of small holes. The Central Bank has launched a competition to find a " _____ " symbol for its currency. Opinion polls suggest Russians like the Latin letter "R" with two lines running through the center. The new note gives Russia a currency to match its superpower _____. Other big-money bills include the US's 100 dollars, the 500 euros and the UAE's 1,000 dirhams.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 "CURRENCY" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the world's currencies.

- 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:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| • supply | • protect |
| • crashed | • design |
| • trouble | • fake |
| • average | • symbol |
| • energy | • center |
| • era | • match |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you think of Russia becoming an economic superpower?
- c. Do you think Russia's new money will help stop its social problems?
- d. Do you think the higher value banknote is a good idea?
- e. Which world currencies do you like or dislike and why?
- f. Have you ever invested in foreign currencies?
- g. What do you think of the currency of your own country?
- h. Do you think there will be just one currency in the world one day?
- i. Do you think it's strange we still have paper money in this digital age?
- j. What would you buy in Moscow if you had a lot of 5,000-rouble notes?

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. Would you invest in the Russian rouble?
- d. What's the largest amount of cash you've ever had in your wallet / purse?
- e. What aspects of your culture would you like your banknotes to show?
- f. Do you think it's interesting to collect banknotes and coins?
- g. What do you think Russians who lived in the Soviet era would think of the new 5,000-rouble banknote?
- h. Do you think computer keyboards should have more keys for the world's most common currencies?
- i. If there was a single world currency, what do you think it should be called?
- 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?

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SPEAKING

NATIONAL UPGRADE: With your partner(s), decide on ideas on how to upgrade / improve different aspects of your country's (or each other's country) culture. You have to upgrade the following:

| | Ideas |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Currency | |
| Flag | |
| Voting system | |
| Banking system | |
| Transportation system | |
| Taxation system | |
| Country motto | |
| Other _____ | |

Change partners and exchange your ideas. Decide which are the best ideas.

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 information on Russia's rouble. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. POSTER: Make a poster about the currency of your country. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson.

4. ARTICLE: Write an imaginary newspaper article about the day the new 5,000-rouble notes came out. Include interviews with imaginary Russians. What did they say about their new banknote? Read your article to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article did you like best and why?

Russia issues 5,000-rouble note – 2 August, 2006 (easier)

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a. banknote | bill |
| b. richer | wealthier |
| c. trouble | difficulty |
| d. growth | increase |
| e. status | position |
| f. protect | safeguard |
| g. features | characteristics |
| h. launched | started |
| i. catchy | memorable |
| j. match | be equal to |

PHRASE MATCH:

| | |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. money | supply |
| b. high inflation brought great | trouble to the economy |
| c. the growth of average | incomes |
| d. It is the world's second | largest oil producer |
| e. the Soviet-era debt of £12.5bn | it owed to other countries |
| f. tried hard to protect the new note | from being copied |
| g. check if a banknote is real | and not fake |
| h. find a "catchy" | symbol for its currency |
| i. two lines running through | the center |
| j. ...gives Russia a currency to match | its superpower status |

GAP FILL:

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Russia put a 5,000-rouble banknote **back** into its money supply on July 31st. The new note was introduced because Russian people are becoming **richer**. Russia's Central Bank said that the bill was not to stop inflation. The last time Russia had a 5,000-rouble note was in 1998 - the year the rouble **crashed**. At that **time**, high inflation brought great trouble to the economy. The government said it was necessary to have high value notes because of the "**growth** of average incomes in the country". The Russian rouble is currently very strong because of Russia's **status** as an energy superpower. It is the world's second largest oil producer. Russia now has so much money that it agreed to **repay** all of the Soviet-era debt of £12.5bn it **owed** to other countries.

The Siberian News Agency reports Russia's government has tried hard to **protect** the new note from being copied. The note's design includes many special, high-tech **features** that allow banks and stores to check if a banknote is real and not fake. The bill has hidden rainbow **stripes**, which look gray from a different angle. Holding up the banknote to the **light**, one can see the number 5,000 formed by lots of small **holes**. The Central Bank has launched a competition to find a "catchy" **symbol** for its currency. Opinion polls suggest Russians like the Latin letter "R" with two **lines** running through the center. The new note gives Russia a currency to match its superpower status. Other big-money bills **include** the US's 100 dollars, the 500 euros and the UAE's 1,000 dirhams.