

## Laura Bush's 5-hour Afghan trip (Wed 30 Mar, 2005)

### WARM-UPS

**CHAT:** Talk in pairs or groups about 5-hour trips / first ladies/ Laura Bush / Afghanistan / Hamid Karzai / Taliban / Afghan women / female teachers / Afghan democracy...Change topic / partner frequently to increase conversation.

**LAURA BRAINSTORM:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with America's First Lady Laura Bush. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**MY 5 HOURS:** Where would you like to go in the world for five hours? Write down a minute-by-minute plan of your whirlwind tour. Include things to see, do, eat, buy; people to visit, photos to take, toilet breaks (?) etc. Talk with your partner / group about your plans and ask each other questions. Decide after who has the best plan.

**OPINIONS:** Read these people's opinions about Laura Bush's visit. Do you share these opinions?

- a. "Five hours is a waste of time and taxpayers' money." (American taxpayer)
- b. "What a woman! Laura is as brave as her husband." (American Republican)
- c. "What is a first lady? Was she democratically elected?" (Iraqi housewife)
- d. "Anything that can highlight how the lives of women in Afghanistan have improved is great." (Nigerian teacher)
- e. "If your gonna come all this way, why not spend a day or two and get lots of publicity for us Afghan women?" (Afghan woman)
- f. "The wives of world leaders should stay out of politics." (World leader – male)
- g. "I'm so looking forward to Mrs. Bush's visit. She shows the world cares about us." (Female trainee teacher – Kabul)
- h. "She's the perfect woman." (A president)

## PRE-READING IDEAS

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

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

- a. A new supersonic jet will speed Mrs. Bush to Afghanistan in just five hours. T / F
- b. There are many whirlwinds in the Afghan capital. T / F
- c. While on Afghan soil she will meet President Hamid Karzai. T / F
- d. Mrs. Bush has wanted to visit Afghanistan since she was seven years old. T / F
- e. The main purpose of her trip is to show solidarity with Afghanistan's women. T / F
- f. She wants to show America's commitment to the people of Afghanistan. T / F
- g. She will teach a sample class at a teacher training institute. T / F
- h. She will watch \$17.7 million being given to the American University in Kabul. T / F

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

- |                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| (a) headed          | swept      |
| (b) whirlwind       | oneness    |
| (c) whisked         | pledge     |
| (d) shrouded        | left       |
| (e) morale-boosting | emphasize  |
| (f) solidarity      | fortifying |
| (g) fall            | covered    |
| (h) underscore      | lightning  |
| (i) commitment      | subsidy    |
| (j) grant           | overthrow  |

**PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article:

- |                            |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| (a) headed                 | of thanks           |
| (b) amid tight             | will be awarded     |
| (c) shrouded               | solidarity with     |
| (d) While on Afghan        | commitment          |
| (e) pass on words          | for Afghanistan     |
| (f) The main               | soil                |
| (g) show                   | purpose of her trip |
| (h) see the advances       | in secrecy          |
| (i) long-term              | made for women      |
| (j) a \$17.7 million grant | security            |

## GAP FILL

### Laura Bush's 5-hour Afghan trip

**BNE:** The USA's First Lady Laura Bush \_\_\_\_\_ for Afghanistan today for a whirlwind five-hour trip. She will arrive in Kabul \_\_\_\_\_ tight security and be immediately whisked around her various engagements in the Afghan capital. Her whole visit has been shrouded in secrecy \_\_\_\_\_ to security concerns; details of her "tour" only emerged after her plane took off. While on Afghan soil she will meet President Hamid Karzai and have a morale-boosting dinner with US troops, during which she is sure to \_\_\_\_\_ on words of thanks and praise from her husband. Mrs. Bush told reporters she has wanted to visit Afghanistan for many years but has always \_\_\_\_\_ her trip because of the Taliban.

*due            headed            delayed            amid            pass*

The main purpose of her trip is to show solidarity with Afghanistan's women and \_\_\_\_\_ how her husband's actions have improved their lives since the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Taliban in 2001. "She wants to be able to see the \_\_\_\_\_ made for women in Afghanistan and to underscore the United States' long-term commitment to the people of Afghanistan," said Susan Whiston, the First Lady's press secretary. Besides meeting the Afghan President and \_\_\_\_\_ with soldiers she will visit a Women's Teacher Training Institute and meet with students and teachers, and attend a ceremony in which a \$17.7 million grant will be \_\_\_\_\_ to the American University in Kabul.

*advances            highlight            dining            awarded            fall*

## DISCUSSION:

What was interesting in this article?

Were you surprised by anything in this article?

What do you think of Laura Bush?

What do you think of first ladies (or first gentlemen)?

Is Mrs. Bush's visit worthwhile?

Was Mrs. Bush's husband's invasion of Afghanistan worthwhile?

Should Mrs. Bush take on a bigger role in highlighting women's issues?

What does the first lady (or gentleman) do in your country?

What do you think of other first ladies in the world?

Who is the second lady in the USA / your country?

Have you ever been on a whirlwind tour?

Would you like to visit Kabul?

Is there some place you have been dying to visit?

Should Laura Bush run to be America's next president?

Don't you think George W. and Laura are role models as a married couple?

Did you like this discussion?

Teacher / Student additional questions.

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## 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 Laura Bush. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. AFGHAN WOMEN:** Write a short news article on how the lives of Afghan women have improved.
- 4. LAURA'S DIARY:** Write the diary entry for Mrs. Laura Bush's five-hour trip to Kabul.

## TEXT

### Laura Bush's 5-hour Afghan trip

**BNE:** The USA's First Lady Laura Bush **headed** for Afghanistan today for a whirlwind five-hour trip. She will arrive in Kabul **amid** tight security and be immediately whisked around her various engagements in the Afghan capital. Her whole visit has been shrouded in secrecy **due** to security concerns; details of her "tour" only emerged after her plane took off. While on Afghan soil she will meet President Hamid Karzai and have a morale-boosting dinner with US troops, during which she is sure to **pass** on words of thanks and praise from her husband. Mrs. Bush told reporters she has wanted to visit Afghanistan for many years but has always **delayed** her trip because of the Taliban.

The main purpose of her trip is to show solidarity with Afghanistan's women and **highlight** how her husband's actions have improved their lives since the **fall** of the Taliban in 2001. "She wants to be able to see the **advances** made for women in Afghanistan and to underscore the United States' long-term commitment to the people of Afghanistan," said Susan Whiston, the First Lady's press secretary. Besides meeting the Afghan President and **dining** with soldiers she will visit a Women's Teacher Training Institute and meet with students and teachers, and attend a ceremony in which a \$17.7 million grant will be **awarded** to the American University in Kabul.