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Putin is 'Time' magazine's person of 2007

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20th December, 2007

THE ARTICLE

The American weekly news magazine Time has named Russia's president Vladimir Putin as its 2007 "Person of the Year." Putin won the award for bringing stability to Russia at a time when it was experiencing chaos. Time's managing editor Richard Stengel said the magazine chose Putin because of his "extraordinary feat of leadership" in restoring Russia as a world power. However, he pointed out that the award is not an "honor or endorsement", but is given as "a clear-eyed recognition of the world as it is and of the most powerful individuals and forces shaping that world - for better or for worse". Past winners of the award include Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. This year's runners up were Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling and Chinese President Hu Jintao.

President Putin is hugely popular in Russia and recently won a landslide election victory. He has reformed the economy and created great wealth. His critics, however, accuse him of being undemocratic and having too much control over the media. Mr Stengel noted that Putin was not a perfect leader, saying: "He's the new czar of Russia and he's dangerous in the sense that he doesn't care about civil liberties, he doesn't care about free speech." Not everyone agreed with the award. The American news network Fox believes the leader of US troops in Iraq General David Petraeus was more deserving. Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Kremlin was happier. It said: "We do hope this will create a better understanding that Russia is a democratic country and is standing for fair play and avoiding double standards."

WARM-UPS

1. MAGAZINES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about magazines. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

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

weekly news / awards / stability / chaos / leadership / recognition / forces / elections / wealth / civil liberties / free speech / being deserving / fair play

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

3. PEOPLE OF 2007: With your partner(s), decide on who you think should get the awards below. Change partners and share your findings. Can you agree as a class on one winner for each award?

- woman of 2007
- man of 2007
- team of 2007
- company of 2007
- student of 2007
- teacher of 2007
- idea of 2007
- word of 2007

4. TIME MAGAZINE WINNERS: With your partner(s), discuss why the following previous winners of Time Magazine's "Person of the Year" award won. Do you think they deserved to win?

- Mahatma Gandhi (1930)
- Adolf Hitler (1938)
- Martin Luther King Jr (1963)
- The computer (1982)
- Bill Clinton (1998)
- George W Bush (2000 & 2004)
- The American soldier (2003)
- You (2006)

5. I'M PERSON OF 2007: Spend one minute writing down reasons why you should be Person of the Year. Share your reasons with your partner(s) and talk about them.

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

7. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A **strongly** believes that Vladimir Putin was the perfect choice for Person of the Year; Student B believes it was a terrible choice and that person X should have got it. Change partners often. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. A U.S. publication has chosen Russia's president as person of 2007. T / F
- b. Putin won the award largely for helping bring stability to the world. T / F
- c. *Time* said winning the award was a great honor for the winner. T / F
- d. Adolf Hitler was a past winner of *Time's* Person of the Year award. T / F
- e. Putin has increased the prosperity of his country. T / F
- f. *Time's* managing editor said Putin cared deeply about civil liberties. T / F
- g. America's Fox News did not think Putin should have got the award. T / F
- h. The Kremlin said the award will show how democratic Russia is. T / F

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

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. stability | a. achievement |
| 2. chaos | b. steering clear of |
| 3. feat | c. molding |
| 4. endorsement | d. overwhelming |
| 5. shaping | e. blame |
| 6. landslide | f. approval |
| 7. accuse | g. observed |
| 8. noted | h. disorder |
| 9. deserving | i. order |
| 10. avoiding | j. worthy |

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

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. bringing stability to Russia at a time when | a. it is |
| 2. his extraordinary feat | b. perfect leader |
| 3. the award is not an honor | c. up |
| 4. recognition of the world as | d. election victory |
| 5. This year's runners | e. or endorsement |
| 6. recently won a landslide | f. double standards |
| 7. Stengel noted that Putin was not a | g. he's dangerous |
| 8. He's the new czar of Russia and | h. more deserving |
| 9. General David Petraeus was | i. of leadership |
| 10. standing for fair play and avoiding | j. it was experiencing chaos |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

The American weekly news magazine Time has _____ Russia's president Vladimir Putin as its 2007 "Person of the Year." Putin won the award for bringing _____ to Russia at a time when it was experiencing chaos. Time's managing editor Richard Stengel said the magazine chose Putin because of his "extraordinary _____ of leadership" in restoring Russia as a world _____. However, he pointed out that the award is not an "_____ or endorsement", but is given as "a clear-eyed recognition of the world as it is and of the most powerful individuals and _____ shaping that world - for better or for worse". Past winners of the award _____ Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. This year's _____ up were Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling and Chinese President Hu Jintao.

*forces**power**feat**include**named**honor**runners**stability*

President Putin is _____ popular in Russia and recently won a landslide election victory. He has _____ the economy and created great wealth. His critics, however, _____ him of being undemocratic and having too much control over the media. Mr Stengel noted that Putin was not a perfect leader, saying: "He's the new czar of Russia and he's dangerous in the _____ that he doesn't care about civil liberties, he doesn't care about free speech." Not everyone _____ with the award. The American news network Fox believes the leader of US troops in Iraq General David Petraeus was more _____. Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Kremlin was happier. It said: "We do hope this will create a better understanding that Russia is a democratic country and is standing for _____ play and avoiding double _____."

*accuse**standards**sense**deserving**fair**hugely**agreed**reformed*

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The American _____ Time has named Russia's president Vladimir Putin as its 2007 "Person of the Year." Putin won the award for bringing stability to Russia at a time when it _____. Time's managing editor Richard Stengel said the magazine chose Putin because of his "extraordinary feat of leadership" in restoring Russia as a world power. However, he pointed _____ an "honor or endorsement", _____ clear-eyed recognition of the world as it is and of the most powerful individuals and forces shaping that world - _____ worse". Past winners of the award include Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. This year's _____ Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling and Chinese President Hu Jintao.

President Putin _____ Russia and recently won a landslide election victory. He has reformed the economy and created great wealth. His critics, however, _____ undemocratic and having too much control over the media. Mr Stengel noted that Putin was not a perfect leader, saying: "He's _____ Russia and he's dangerous in the sense that he doesn't care about civil liberties, he doesn't _____." Not everyone agreed with the award. The American news network Fox believes the leader of US troops in Iraq General David Petraeus _____. Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Kremlin was happier. It said: "We do hope this will create a better understanding that Russia is a democratic country and is standing _____ avoiding double standards."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

fair	play
-------------	-------------

- 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 exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • named • chaos • feat • honor • worse • runners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hugely • wealth • sense • everyone • happier • double
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STUDENT PERSON OF THE YEAR SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about the person of 2007 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.

DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
 - b) Do you like the idea of a person of the year award?
 - c) Do you think the *Time* award is too biased towards Americans?
 - d) What do you think of Vladimir Putin as the winner?
 - e) What do you think of an award that either a hero or villain can get?
 - f) Do you think Vladimir Putin is a hero or villain?
 - g) How do you think Vladimir Putin has shaped the world?
 - h) What do you think of the past winners of the award?
 - i) Do you think one of the runners up were more deserving than Vladimir Putin?
-

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Why do you think Vladimir Putin is so popular in his country?
- c) What is wrong with a leader having control of the country's media?
- d) Do you think there are or have been perfect leaders in any country?
- e) Do you really think Vladimir Putin really doesn't care about civil liberties or free speech?
- f) Do you think General David Petraeus would have been a worthier winner?
- g) Do you agree with the Kremlin that the award will help people understand that Russia is a democratic country?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Vladimir Putin?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

The American weekly news magazine Time has (1) ____ Russia's president Vladimir Putin as its 2007 "Person of the Year." Putin won the award for bringing stability to Russia at a time when it was experiencing (2) _____. Time's managing editor Richard Stengel said the magazine chose Putin because of his "extraordinary (3) ____ of leadership" in restoring Russia as a world power. However, he pointed (4) ____ that the award is not an "honor or endorsement", but is given as "a clear-eyed recognition of the world (5) ____ it is and of the most powerful individuals and forces shaping that world - for better or for worse". Past winners of the award include Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. This year's runners (6) ____ were Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling and Chinese President Hu Jintao.

President Putin is (7) ____ popular in Russia and recently won a landslide election victory. He has reformed the economy and created (8) ____ wealth. His critics, however, accuse him of being undemocratic and having too much control over the media. Mr Stengel noted that Putin was not a perfect leader, saying: "He's the new czar of Russia and he's dangerous in the (9) ____ that he doesn't care about civil (10) _____, he doesn't care about free speech." Not everyone agreed with the award. The American news network Fox believes the leader of US troops in Iraq General David Petraeus was more (11) _____. Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Kremlin was happier. It said: "We do hope this will create a better understanding that Russia is a democratic country and is standing for fair play and avoiding (12) ____ standards."

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) named | (b) dubbed | (c) called | (d) addressed |
| 2. | (a) chaotic | (b) chaos | (c) chaos theory | (d) chaotically |
| 3. | (a) footing | (b) feet | (c) foot | (d) feat |
| 4. | (a) on | (b) in | (c) out | (d) off |
| 5. | (a) is | (b) as | (c) was | (d) at |
| 6. | (a) up | (b) in | (c) over | (d) down |
| 7. | (a) hugging | (b) hugs | (c) hugest | (d) hugely |
| 8. | (a) greatly | (b) greatness | (c) great | (d) greatest |
| 9. | (a) senses | (b) sensor | (c) sensation | (d) sense |
| 10. | (a) liberties | (b) libraries | (c) liberation | (d) liberals |
| 11. | (a) deservingly | (b) deservedly | (c) deserving | (d) deserves |
| 12. | (a) triple | (b) double | (c) single | (d) quadruple |

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 about the *Time* Person of the Year award. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. AWARDS: Make a poster about the prizes you think are most important in the world. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all include similar things?

4. RIVALRY: Write a magazine article about you winning the *Time* Person of the Year award. Include imaginary interviews with yourself and your best friend.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Vladimir Putin. Give him three suggestions on what he should do to be a better leader. Give him three reasons why he should take your advice. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. stability | a. order |
| 2. chaos | b. disorder |
| 3. feat | c. achievement |
| 4. endorsement | d. approval |
| 5. shaping | e. molding |
| 6. landslide | f. overwhelming |
| 7. accuse | g. blame |
| 8. noted | h. observed |
| 9. deserving | i. worthy |
| 10. avoiding | j. steering clear of |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. bringing stability to Russia at a time when | a. it was experiencing chaos |
| 2. his extraordinary feat | b. of leadership |
| 3. the award is not an honor | c. or endorsement |
| 4. recognition of the world as | d. it is |
| 5. This year's runners | e. up |
| 6. recently won a landslide | f. election victory |
| 7. Stengel noted that Putin was not a | g. perfect leader |
| 8. He's the new czar of Russia and | h. he's dangerous |
| 9. General David Petraeus was | i. more deserving |
| 10. standing for fair play and avoiding | j. double standards |

GAP FILL:

Putin is 'Time' magazine's person of 2007

The American weekly news magazine Time has **named** Russia's president Vladimir Putin as its 2007 "Person of the Year." Putin won the award for bringing **stability** to Russia at a time when it was experiencing chaos. Time's managing editor Richard Stengel said the magazine chose Putin because of his "extraordinary **feat** of leadership" in restoring Russia as a world **power**. However, he pointed out that the award is not an "**honor** or endorsement", but is given as "a clear-eyed recognition of the world as it is and of the most powerful individuals and **forces** shaping that world - for better or for worse". Past winners of the award **include** Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. This year's **runners** up were Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling and Chinese President Hu Jintao.

President Putin is **hugely** popular in Russia and recently won a landslide election victory. He has **reformed** the economy and created great wealth. His critics, however, **accuse** him of being undemocratic and having too much control over the media. Mr Stengel noted that Putin was not a perfect leader, saying: "He's the new czar of Russia and he's dangerous in the **sense** that he doesn't care about civil liberties, he doesn't care about free speech." Not everyone **agreed** with the award. The American news network Fox believes the leader of US troops in Iraq General David Petraeus was more **deserving**. Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Kremlin was happier. It said: "We do hope this will create a better understanding that Russia is a democratic country and is standing for **fair** play and avoiding double **standards**."

LANGUAGE WORK

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