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Fidel Castro to return to power

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8 August, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Fidel Castro to return to power

Cuban President Fidel Castro may soon return to power. He is in hospital recovering from an operation on his stomach. He has handed power to his younger brother Raul. It is the first time in 47 years Castro has not been in control of Cuba. Many Cubans living overseas are beginning to believe this is the beginning of the end for the communist leader. Details of his surgery and his health are a closely guarded secret. Castro's government wants to stop Cuba's enemies from using the present situation to try and change things in Cuba. The US was quick to tell Cubans to push for democracy. Condoleezza Rice told reporters that: "The United States wants to be a partner and a friend to the Cuban people as they move through this period of difficulty and as they move ahead."

Cuba's Vice-President Carlos Lage stated: "Fidel's going to be around for another 80 years." Lage added that Castro's return would show that the White House lied about Castro losing power. Castro has received many get-well wishes from across South America. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez - a close Castro friend - said he had news that Castro was in good health. "This morning I learnt that he's...talking more than he should - because he talks a lot you know," Mr. Chavez said. Colombia's largest rebel group the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia also sent Castro a message. "We hope you'll recover in the shortest time possible," it said in a statement. Fidel Castro is one of the world's longest-ruling leaders. He has held power while nine US presidents have been and gone.

WARM-UPS

1. FIDEL CASTRO: Walk around the class and find out as much as you can about Fidel Castro and Cuba. When you have finished, find a new partner and share your information.

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

Presidents / power / operations / control / living overseas / health / secrets / partners / White House / lies / get-well wishes / South America / rebels / leaders

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

3. REVOLUTIONS: With your partner(s), talk about the following revolutions. Decide on the most important point of each one. Change partner(s) and share what you talked about. (You may need to use the Internet to find out information.)

- Cuban Revolution
- French Revolution
- Russian Revolution
- Cedar Revolution
- Orange Revolution
- Peoples' Revolution
- Industrial Revolution
- American Revolution
- Sexual Revolution
- Digital Revolution

4. QUICK DEBATE: Students A believe Fidel Castro is a great leader. Students B believe Fidel Castro is a monster. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

5. AFTERLIFE: With your partner(s), talk about what life might be like after these leaders are no longer in power. Which leader(s) would you most like to go?

- Fidel Castro (Cuba)
- George W. Bush (USA)
- Vladimir Putin (Russia)
- Kim Jong Il (North Korea)
- Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe)
- Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Iran)
- King Mswati III (Swaziland)
- The leader of your country

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

7. REVOLUTIONARY: Imagine you are the new revolutionary leader of your country. Talk with the other "revolutionaries" in the class about the changes you are going to make.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. Fidel Castro may soon return to power following a stomach operation. T / F
- b. It is the first time he has given up power in 47 years as president. T / F
- c. The latest details of his health are being announced on Cuban TV. T / F
- d. Condoleezza Rice said Castro was a partner and a friend. T / F
- e. Cuba's vice-president said Castro would live to be 80 years old. T / F
- f. Venezuela's president feels Castro will never recover. T / F
- g. Colombia's largest rebel group sent Castro a message of support. T / F
- h. As Cuba's leader, Castro has seen nine US presidents come and go. T / F

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

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| a. return | current |
| b. handed | get better |
| c. overseas | got |
| d. guarded | governing |
| e. present | abroad |
| f. show | ally |
| g. received | reveal |
| h. friend | come back |
| i. recover | given |
| j. ruling | protected |

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Fidel Castro may soon return | secret |
| b. recovering | around for another 80 years |
| c. the beginning | from an operation |
| d. a closely guarded | and gone |
| e. The US was quick to tell Cubans to | in good health |
| f. Fidel's going to be | push for democracy |
| g. Castro has received many | to power |
| h. he had news that Castro was | get-well wishes |
| i. We hope you'll recover in the | of the end |
| j. nine US presidents have been | shortest time possible |

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WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Fidel Castro to return to power

Cuban President Fidel Castro may soon _____ to power. He is in hospital recovering from an _____ on his stomach. He has _____ power to his younger brother Raul. It is the first time in 47 years Castro has not been in control of Cuba. Many Cubans living overseas are beginning to believe this is the _____ of the end for the communist leader. Details of his surgery and his health are a closely guarded _____. Castro's government wants to stop Cuba's enemies from using the _____ situation to try and change things in Cuba. The US was quick to tell Cubans to _____ for democracy. Condoleezza Rice told reporters that: "The United States wants to be a partner and a friend to the Cuban people as they move through this period of difficulty and as they _____ ahead."

push
beginning
operation
move
secret
return
present
handed

Cuba's Vice-President Carlos Lage stated: "Fidel's going to be _____ for another 80 years." Lage added that Castro's return would show that the White House lied about Castro _____ power. Castro has received many get-well _____ from across South America. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez - a _____ Castro friend - said he had news that Castro was in good health. "This morning I learnt that he's...talking more than he should - because he talks a lot you know," Mr. Chavez said. Colombia's largest _____ group the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia also sent Castro a message. "We hope you'll _____ in the shortest time possible," it said in a statement. Fidel Castro is one of the world's _____ -ruling leaders. He has _____ power while nine US presidents have been and gone.

recover
close
losing
held
around
longest
wishes
rebel

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LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Fidel Castro to return to power

Cuban President Fidel Castro may soon _____ power. He is in hospital recovering from an operation on his stomach. He has handed power to his younger brother Raul. It is the first time in 47 years Castro has not been _____ Cuba. Many Cubans living overseas are beginning to believe this is the beginning _____ the communist leader. Details of his surgery and his health are a closely guarded secret. Castro's government wants to stop Cuba's enemies from using the present situation _____ change things in Cuba. The US was quick to tell Cubans to push for democracy. Condoleezza Rice told reporters that: "The United States wants to be a partner and a friend to the Cuban people as they move through _____ difficulty and as they move ahead."

Cuba's Vice-President Carlos Lage stated: "Fidel's going to _____ another 80 years." Lage added that Castro's return would show that the White House _____ Castro losing power. Castro has received many get-well wishes from across South America. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez - a close Castro friend - said he had news that Castro _____ health. "This morning I learnt that he's...talking more _____ - because he talks a lot you know," Mr. Chavez said. Colombia's largest rebel group the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia also sent Castro a message. "We hope you'll _____ the shortest time possible," it said in a statement. Fidel Castro is one of the world's longest-ruling leaders. He has held power while nine US presidents have _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 "CASTRO" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about Cuban leader Fidel Castro and life under his revolution.

- 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:

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| • return | • around |
| • control | • lied |
| • end | • wishes |
| • enemies | • close |
| • push | • rebel |
| • period | • gone |

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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 a leader being in power for 47 years?
- c. What do you think about Fidel Castro?
- d. What do you think of Castro "temporarily" handing over power to his brother Raul?
- e. What do you think Cuban people feel about Fidel Castro?
- f. What do you think George W. Bush and Fidel Castro would talk about if they met?
- g. Do you think Fidel Castro has been good for Cuba?
- h. Many people have romantic images about Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and their revolution. Do you?
- i. Would you wear a Fidel Castro or Che Guevara T-shirt?
- j. What will happen to Cuba when Castro dies?

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. Who do you like better, Fidel Castro or George W. Bush (and why)?
- d. Why do many world leaders think Castro is a hero while many others think he is a monster?
- e. What would Cuba be like today if Castro didn't start his revolution?
- f. Do you think Fidel Castro a dictator?
- g. Castro once said democracy stops progress. Do you agree with this?
- h. Would you like to meet Fidel Castro?
- i. What questions would you like to ask him and how do you think he'd answer?
- 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

WORLD REVOLUTION: With your partner(s), create an outline for a world revolution. Complete the table below

Name of the revolution	
Revolution motto	
A good leader	
Aim 1	
Barriers to Aim 1	
Aim 2	
Barriers to Aim 2	
Aim 3	
Barriers to Aim 3	
How the world will be a better place after the revolution	

Change partners and exchange your ideas. Decide on who has the best revolutionary 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 more information about Cuban leader Fidel Castro and the different opinions people have of him. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. REVOLUTION ARTICLE: Write a newspaper article about a revolution that happened recently (true or false; political, technological, social, etc). Show your article to your classmates in the next lesson. Talk about which articles you liked best and why.

4. LETTER: Write a letter to Fidel Castro. Tell him what you think of his reign in power and his leadership. Give him advice on what he should do from now. Ask him three questions. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions. Which letter did you like best and why?

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ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| a. return | come back |
| b. handed | given |
| c. overseas | abroad |
| d. guarded | protected |
| e. present | current |
| f. show | reveal |
| g. received | got |
| h. friend | ally |
| i. recover | get better |
| j. ruling | governing |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Fidel Castro may soon return | to power |
| b. recovering | from an operation |
| c. the beginning | of the end |
| d. a closely guarded | secret |
| e. The US was quick to tell Cubans to | push for democracy |
| f. Fidel's going to be | around for another 80 years |
| g. Castro has received many | get-well wishes |
| h. he had news that Castro was | in good health |
| i. We hope you'll recover in the | shortest time possible |
| j. nine US presidents have been | and gone |

GAP FILL:

Fidel Castro to return to power

Cuban President Fidel Castro may soon **return** to power. He is in hospital recovering from an **operation** on his stomach. He has **handed** power to his younger brother Raul. It is the first time in 47 years Castro has not been in control of Cuba. Many Cubans living overseas are beginning to believe this is the **beginning** of the end for the communist leader. Details of his surgery and his health are a closely guarded **secret**. Castro's government wants to stop Cuba's enemies from using the **present** situation to try and change things in Cuba. The US was quick to tell Cubans to **push** for democracy. Condoleezza Rice told reporters that: "The United States wants to be a partner and a friend to the Cuban people as they move through this period of difficulty and as they **move** ahead."

Cuba's Vice-President Carlos Lage stated: "Fidel's going to be **around** for another 80 years." Lage added that Castro's return would show that the White House lied about Castro **losing** power. Castro has received many get-well **wishes** from across South America. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez - a **close** Castro friend - said he had news that Castro was in good health. "This morning I learnt that he's...talking more than he should - because he talks a lot you know," Mr. Chavez said. Colombia's largest **rebel** group the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia also sent Castro a message. "We hope you'll **recover** in the shortest time possible," it said in a statement. Fidel Castro is one of the world's **longest**-ruling leaders. He has **held** power while nine US presidents have been and gone.