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New York's 'green' New Year

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1st January, 2008

THE ARTICLE

Over one million partygoers saw in the New Year in New York's Times Square on Monday night and witnessed one of 2008's very first efforts to conserve energy. The traditional New Year's Eve ball, which has brought in New York's new year for the past 100 years, went green. The ball was first dropped from a flagpole at One Times Square on December 31st, 1907. It was made of wood and iron and contained one hundred 25-watt light bulbs. A century on and the new energy-efficient ball was fitted with 9,576 light-emitting diodes, which use about the same amount of electricity as 10 toasters. Although it is twice as bright as earlier balls and can produce a kaleidoscope of 16 million colours, it needs considerably less power. Anyone wanting a similar decoration to celebrate the next New Year will need a cool \$1.1 million to buy one.

Technology was a key part of the festivities in New York on Monday. Tim Tompkins, the president of the group in charge of the Times Square celebrations, said: "Times Square has always been an arena where the latest and greatest cutting-edge technology is unveiled and showcased." A representative from Philips, the company that made this year's ball said: "The whole world looks up to New York's New Year's Eve. I'm proud to be able to save energy and show off this technology to the world with such a special event." Another innovative use of technology used on Monday night was a virtual wall of Internet confetti. People from around the world typed their New Year wishes on a special Internet site. The messages were then printed on one ton of multicoloured paper, which floated down on revelers in the streets.

WARM-UPS

1. 2008: Walk around the class and talk to other students about 2008. 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.

partygoers / New York / New Year's Eve / light bulbs / toasters / kaleidoscope / technology / celebrations / cutting edge / saving energy / confetti / wishes

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

3. MY RESOLUTIONS: Tell your partner(s) what your New Year resolutions are for the following. How different do you think they'll be on 1/1/2009?

- my English level
- my love life
- my finances
- my fitness
- my efforts to conserve energy
- my bad habits
- my kindness to others
- my work

4. WORLD RESOLUTIONS: Decide what resolutions these people will have for 2008. Change partners and discuss whether the resolutions will come true.

- George W. Bush
- Tiger Woods
- Britney Spears
- Ban Ki-Moon
- Bill Gates
- Osama Bin Laden
- a tribeswoman in the Amazon
- your country's leader

5. 2008 HEADLINES: With your partner(s), discuss these headlines for 2008. Will they come true? Would you like them to? What would happen if they did?

- President George W Bush resigns after scandal
- Food wars break out in Latin America
- Cure for cancer and AIDS found
- China tops 2008 Olympics gold medal table
- India overtakes US as world's largest economy
- Car that runs on water invented
- Palestine created – Middle East peace at last
- 2008 worst year ever for natural disasters

6. NEW YEAR'S EVE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the term 'New Year's Eve'. 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 2008 will be the best year ever; Student B **strongly** believes it'll be a bad year. 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. New York's mayor asked all New Year partygoers to wear green. | T / F |
| b. An illuminated ball has been seen in the New Year in NY for a century. | T / F |
| c. This year's ball is energy efficient and contains 9,576 LEDs. | T / F |
| d. The New Year ball is on sale in New York stores for \$1,100. | T / F |
| e. New York staged a traditional, technology-free New Year party. | T / F |
| f. An electronics company spokesman was proud of saving energy. | T / F |
| g. Many people married in Times Square, which was full of confetti. | T / F |
| h. People's wishes were printed on paper which fell on NY's streets. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. witnessed | a. save |
| 2. conserve | b. respects |
| 3. light-emitting diodes | c. ornament |
| 4. considerably | d. partygoers |
| 5. decoration | e. saw |
| 6. festivities | f. pioneering |
| 7. cutting-edge | g. cutting-edge |
| 8. looks up to | h. much |
| 9. innovative | i. celebrations |
| 10. revelers | j. LEDs |

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

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. one of 2008's very first efforts to | a. to New York's New Year |
| 2. one hundred 25-watt | b. conserve energy |
| 3. A century | c. unveiled and showcased |
| 4. a kaleidoscope of | d. part of the festivities |
| 5. a cool | e. 16 million colours |
| 6. Technology was a key | f. of multicoloured paper |
| 7. cutting-edge technology is | g. \$1.1 million |
| 8. The whole world looks up | h. use of technology |
| 9. Another innovative | i. on |
| 10. printed on one ton | j. light bulbs |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Over one million partygoers _____ in the New Year in New York's Times Square on Monday night and witnessed one of 2008's very first _____ to conserve energy. The traditional New Year's Eve ball, which has brought in New York's new year for the past 100 years, went _____. The ball was first dropped from a flagpole at One Times Square on December 31st, 1907. It was made of wood and iron and contained one hundred 25-watt light bulbs. A century _____ and the new energy-efficient ball was fitted with 9,576 light-emitting diodes, which use about the same amount of electricity as 10 _____. Although it is _____ as bright as earlier balls and can produce a kaleidoscope of 16 million colours, it needs _____ less power. Anyone wanting a similar decoration to celebrate the next New Year will need a _____ \$1.1 million to buy one.

considerably

efforts

twice

on

saw

cool

green

toasters

Technology was a _____ part of the festivities in New York on Monday. Tim Tompkins, the president of the group in _____ of the Times Square celebrations, said: "Times Square has always been an _____ where the latest and greatest cutting-edge technology is unveiled and showcased." A representative from Philips, the company that made this year's ball said: "The whole world _____ up to New York's New Year's Eve. I'm proud to be able to save energy and show _____ this technology to the world with such a special event." Another innovative _____ of technology used on Monday night was a virtual wall of Internet confetti. People from around the world typed their New Year _____ on a special Internet site. The messages were then printed on one ton of multicoloured paper, which _____ down on revelers in the streets.

arena

wishes

charge

off

looks

floated

key

use

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Over one _____ New Year in New York's Times Square on Monday night and witnessed one of 2008's _____ conserve energy. The traditional New Year's Eve ball, which has brought in New York's new year _____ years, went green. The ball was first dropped from a flagpole at One Times Square on December 31st, 1907. It was _____ iron and contained one hundred _____ bulbs. A century on and the new energy-efficient ball was fitted with 9,576 light-emitting diodes, which use about the same amount of electricity as 10 toasters. Although it _____ earlier balls and can produce a kaleidoscope of 16 million colours, it needs considerably less power. Anyone wanting a similar decoration to celebrate the next New Year _____ \$1.1 million to buy one.

Technology was _____ festivities in New York on Monday. Tim Tompkins, the president of the group in charge of the Times Square celebrations, said: "Times Square has always _____ the latest and greatest cutting-edge technology is unveiled and showcased." A representative from Philips, the company _____ year's ball said: "The whole world looks up to New York's New Year's Eve. I'm proud to be able to save energy _____ technology to the world with such a special event." Another innovative use of technology used on Monday night _____ Internet confetti. People from around the world typed their New Year wishes on a special Internet site. The messages were then _____ multicoloured paper, which floated down on revelers in the streets.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| new | year |
|------------|-------------|

- 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"> • efforts • green • contained • toasters • kaleidoscope • cool | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key • arena • cutting • special • virtual • floated |
|---|--|

STUDENT 2008 SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about 2008 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) How did you see in 2008?
 - c) Do you have lots of good memories about New Year's Eves?
 - d) Which city would you like to be in for New Year's Eve?
 - e) Do you think New York is the best place to be for the New Year?
 - f) Is the energy-conserving ball a good idea?
 - g) What happens in your country over the New Year period?
 - h) Do you feel different on the first day of a new year?
 - i) What do you think a coloured ball has to do with the New Year?
-

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Technology or fireworks?
- c) Do you think the world really looks up to New York at the New Year?
- d) Did you have a good year last year?
- e) What are your New Year resolutions? Do you think you'll keep them?
- f) What do you think 2008 has in store for the world?
- g) Do you think 2008 will be a good year for you?
- h) What wish would you like to have had printed on the Times Square confetti?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

LANGUAGE

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

Over one million partygoers saw (1) _____ the New Year in New York's Times Square on Monday night and witnessed one of 2008's very first (2) _____ to conserve energy. The traditional New Year's Eve ball, which has brought in New York's new year for the past 100 years, (3) _____ green. The ball was first dropped from a flagpole at One Times Square on December 31st, 1907. It was made of wood and iron and contained one hundred 25-watt light bulbs. A century (4) _____ and the new energy-efficient ball was fitted with 9,576 light-emitting diodes, which use about the same amount of electricity as 10 toasters. Although it is (5) _____ as bright as earlier balls and can produce a kaleidoscope of 16 million colours, it needs considerably less power. Anyone wanting a similar decoration to celebrate the next New Year will need a (6) _____ \$1.1 million to buy one.

Technology was a (7) _____ part of the festivities in New York on Monday. Tim Tompkins, the president of the group in (8) _____ of the Times Square celebrations, said: "Times Square has always been an arena where the latest and greatest cutting-(9) _____ technology is unveiled and showcased." A representative from Philips, the company that made this year's ball said: "The whole world looks (10) _____ to New York's New Year's Eve. I'm proud to be able to save energy and show off this technology to the world with such a special event." Another (11) _____ use of technology used on Monday night was a virtual wall of Internet confetti. People from around the world typed their New Year wishes on a special Internet site. The messages were then printed on one ton of multicoloured paper, which (12) _____ down on revelers in the streets.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. | (a) out | (b) in | (c) all | (d) down |
| 2. | (a) efforts | (b) effortless | (c) effort | (d) effortlessly |
| 3. | (a) dyed | (b) came | (c) began | (d) went |
| 4. | (a) up | (b) all | (c) on | (d) out |
| 5. | (a) twice | (b) double | (c) two | (d) two-time |
| 6. | (a) cold | (b) cool | (c) chilly | (d) freezing |
| 7. | (a) keyed | (b) quay | (c) keys | (d) key |
| 8. | (a) charged | (b) charges | (c) charge | (d) charger |
| 9. | (a) border | (b) rim | (c) side | (d) edge |
| 10. | (a) up | (b) down | (c) in | (d) out |
| 11. | (a) innovate | (b) innovation | (c) innovative | (d) innovator |
| 12. | (a) flotation | (b) floated | (c) flotilla | (d) floatation |

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 how different cities saw in the New Year. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. RESOLUTIONS: Make a poster about your New Year resolutions. Put your targets on the poster and the reasons for them. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. 2008: Imagine it's 2009. Write a magazine article about the year 2008. Include imaginary interviews with leaders and ordinary people. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to a good friend. Ask him/her three questions about his/her plans for this year. Give him/her three suggestions on what he/she should do to have a fantastic year. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. witnessed | a. saw |
| 2. conserve | b. save |
| 3. light-emitting diodes | c. LEDs |
| 4. considerably | d. much |
| 5. decoration | e. ornament |
| 6. festivities | f. celebrations |
| 7. cutting-edge | g. pioneering |
| 8. looks up to | h. respects |
| 9. innovative | i. cutting-edge |
| 10. revelers | j. partygoers |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. one of 2008's very first efforts to | a. conserve energy |
| 2. one hundred 25-watt | b. light bulbs |
| 3. A century | c. on |
| 4. a kaleidoscope of | d. 16 million colours |
| 5. a cool | e. \$1.1 million |
| 6. Technology was a key | f. part of the festivities |
| 7. cutting-edge technology is | g. unveiled and showcased |
| 8. The whole world looks up | h. to New York's New Year |
| 9. Another innovative | i. use of technology |
| 10. printed on one ton | j. of multicoloured paper |

GAP FILL:

New York's 'green' New Year

Over one million partygoers **saw** in the New Year in New York's Times Square on Monday night and witnessed one of 2008's very first **efforts** to conserve energy. The traditional New Year's Eve ball, which has brought in New York's new year for the past 100 years, went **green**. The ball was first dropped from a flagpole at One Times Square on December 31st, 1907. It was made of wood and iron and contained one hundred 25-watt light bulbs. A century **on** and the new energy-efficient ball was fitted with 9,576 light-emitting diodes, which use about the same amount of electricity as 10 **toasters**. Although it is **twice** as bright as earlier balls and can produce a kaleidoscope of 16 million colours, it needs **considerably** less power. Anyone wanting a similar decoration to celebrate the next New Year will need a **cool** \$1.1 million to buy one.

Technology was a **key** part of the festivities in New York on Monday. Tim Tompkins, the president of the group in **charge** of the Times Square celebrations, said: "Times Square has always been an **arena** where the latest and greatest cutting-edge technology is unveiled and showcased." A representative from Philips, the company that made this year's ball said: "The whole world **looks** up to New York's New Year's Eve. I'm proud to be able to save energy and show **off** this technology to the world with such a special event." Another innovative **use** of technology used on Monday night was a virtual wall of Internet confetti. People from around the world typed their New Year **wishes** on a special Internet site. The messages were then printed on one ton of multicoloured paper, which **floated** down on revelers in the streets.

LANGUAGE WORK

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