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## **Apple briefly world's most valuable company**

**26th January, 2012**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

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# THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

Apple Inc., the innovative and pioneering technology company, was briefly the world's most valuable company on Wednesday. It went neck and neck for the top spot with the oil giant Exxon. At one point in the day's trading, Apple's shares went up six per cent on the Nasdaq exchange to put its market capitalisation at \$446 billion. This was higher than Exxon's \$417 billion valuation. However, at the close of trading, Exxon was up half a percentage point at \$418 billion, slightly ahead of Apple, which went down to \$416 billion. Apple's figures were buoyed by news of its record profits in the last quarter of 2011. It made \$13 billion in profit on \$46 billion in sales. Analysts predict Apple will soon overtake Exxon.

Apple's success has been phenomenal. It was struggling to make a profit fifteen years ago but experienced an incredible revival of fortunes after co-founder Steve Jobs took over as CEO in 1997. He turned the company round with iconic products like the iPod, iMac, iPhone and iPad, which helped the company's profits skyrocket. The past three months is one of the most profitable ever for an American company. In that period, it overtook Hewlett Packard as the world's biggest computer maker and took in more revenue than Google. Apple's profit per employee now exceeds \$400,000 a year. The introduction of the iCloud and soaring demand for the iPhone 5 this year should see the company's value continue to surge.

# WARM-UPS

**1. APPLE:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about Apple. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

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

*innovative / valuable / neck and neck / Nasdaq / capitalization / record profits / phenomenal / struggling / co-founder / iconic / profitable / revenue / soaring demand*

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

**3. VALUE:** What can these companies do to increase their value? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Company	Strengths	How to increase value?
Apple		
Coca Cola		
Ferrari		
Disney		
Starbucks		
Rolex		

**4. COOL:** Students A **strongly** believe Apple is the coolest company in the world; Students B **strongly** believe it isn't. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. BEST:** Which of these companies are most important to you? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- Apple
- Coca Cola
- Starbucks
- Disney
- Google
- Nike
- Post Office
- National Rail

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

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |                                                                        |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. Apple was the world's most valuable company for three seconds.      | T / F |
| b. Apple was competing with an oil company for the top position.       | T / F |
| c. Apple is worth close to half a trillion dollars.                    | T / F |
| d. Analysts believe it won't be long before Apple is number one.       | T / F |
| e. Apple's profits were also phenomenal fifteen years ago.             | T / F |
| f. Steve Jobs kept Apple on the same course when he took over in 1997. | T / F |
| g. Hewlett Packard is still the world's biggest computer maker.        | T / F |
| h. The average Apple employee earns around \$400,000 a year.           | T / F |

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

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. pioneering | a. stimulated   |
| 2. briefly    | b. timeframe    |
| 3. slightly   | c. incredible   |
| 4. buoyed     | d. momentarily  |
| 5. surge      | e. luck         |
| 6. phenomenal | f. cutting-edge |
| 7. revival    | g. rise         |
| 8. fortunes   | h. booming      |
| 9. period     | i. a bit        |
| 10. soaring   | j. comeback     |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                            |                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. the innovative and pioneering           | a. for the top spot      |
| 2. It went neck and neck                   | b. products              |
| 3. put its market capitalisation           | c. of its record profits |
| 4. Exxon closed up half                    | d. phenomenal            |
| 5. buoyed by news                          | e. technology company    |
| 6. Apple's success has been                | f. at \$446 billion      |
| 7. an incredible revival                   | g. to surge              |
| 8. iconic                                  | h. of fortunes           |
| 9. Apple's profit per employee now exceeds | i. a percentage point    |
| 10. continue                               | j. \$400,000             |

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# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

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

Apple Inc., the (1) \_\_\_\_\_ and pioneering technology company, was (2) \_\_\_\_\_ the world's most valuable company on Wednesday. It went neck and neck for the top spot with the oil (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Exxon. At one point in the day's trading, Apple's shares went up six per cent on the Nasdaq exchange to put its (4) \_\_\_\_\_ capitalisation at \$446 billion. This was higher than Exxon's \$417 billion valuation. However, at the close of (5) \_\_\_\_\_, Exxon was up half a percentage point at \$418 billion, slightly ahead of Apple, which went down to \$416 billion. Apple's figures were buoyed by (6) \_\_\_\_\_ of its record profits in the last (7) \_\_\_\_\_ of 2011. It made \$13 billion in profit on \$46 billion in sales. Analysts (8) \_\_\_\_\_ Apple will soon overtake Exxon.

*news*  
*market*  
*briefly*  
*predict*  
*innovative*  
*giant*  
*quarter*  
*trading*

Apple's success has been phenomenal. It was (9) \_\_\_\_\_ to make a profit fifteen years ago but experienced an incredible (10) \_\_\_\_\_ of fortunes after co-founder Steve Jobs took over as CEO in 1997. He turned the company round with (11) \_\_\_\_\_ products like the iPod, iMac, iPhone and iPad, which helped the company's profits (12) \_\_\_\_\_. The past three months is one of the most profitable ever for an American company. In that (13) \_\_\_\_\_, it overtook Hewlett Packard as the world's biggest computer maker and took in more revenue than Google. Apple's profit (14) \_\_\_\_\_ employee now exceeds \$400,000 a year. The introduction of the iCloud and (15) \_\_\_\_\_ demand for the iPhone 5 this year should see the company's value continue to (16) \_\_\_\_\_.

*skyrocket*  
*surge*  
*struggling*  
*revival*  
*period*  
*soaring*  
*iconic*  
*per*

## **LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps**

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

Apple Inc., \_\_\_\_\_ pioneering technology company, was briefly the world's most valuable company on Wednesday. It went neck and \_\_\_\_\_ spot with the oil giant Exxon. At one point in the day's trading, Apple's shares went up six per cent on the Nasdaq exchange to put its \_\_\_\_\_ at \$446 billion. This was higher than Exxon's \$417 billion valuation. However, at \_\_\_\_\_, Exxon was up half a percentage point at \$418 billion, slightly ahead of Apple, which went down to \$416 billion. Apple's figures were \_\_\_\_\_ of its record profits in the last quarter of 2011. It made \$13 billion in profit on \$46 billion in sales. \_\_\_\_\_ Apple will soon overtake Exxon.

Apple's success has been phenomenal. It was \_\_\_\_\_ a profit fifteen years ago but experienced an \_\_\_\_\_ of fortunes after co-founder Steve Jobs took over as CEO in 1997. He turned the company round \_\_\_\_\_ like the iPod, iMac, iPhone and iPad, which helped the company's \_\_\_\_\_. The past three months is one of the most profitable ever for an American company. In that period, it overtook Hewlett Packard as the world's biggest computer maker and took in \_\_\_\_\_ Google. Apple's profit per employee now exceeds \$400,000 a year. The introduction of the iCloud and soaring demand for the iPhone 5 this year should see the company's value \_\_\_\_\_.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

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

<b>valuable</b>	<b>company</b>

- 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 how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• briefly</li><li>• giant</li><li>• six</li><li>• half</li><li>• record</li><li>• soon</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• success</li><li>• incredible</li><li>• iconic</li><li>• three</li><li>• biggest</li><li>• surge</li></ul>
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# APPLE SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

Write five GOOD questions about Apple 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.



# APPLE DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Apple'?
- c) How cool is Apple and its products?
- d) What does Apple need to do to stay so valuable?
- e) Is there a company with a better brand image than Apple?
- f) Apple or PC – which is best?
- g) Apple has more cash than the U.S. government. What do you think of this?
- h) Is "Apple" a good name for a technology company?
- i) What do you think of Apple?
- j) Would you like to work for Apple?

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# APPLE DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think of Apple's products?
- c) Are you surprised Apple is the world's first or second most valuable company?
- d) Do you invest in shares?
- e) Do you think Apple's shares would be a good investment?
- f) Why are people so loyal to Apple?
- g) What's Apple's closest competitor and how do the two companies compare?
- h) What advice would you give to Apple's CEO?
- i) What products should Apple make in the future?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Apple's CEO?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1201/120126-apple.html>

Apple Inc., the innovative and pioneering technology company, was (1) \_\_\_\_\_ the world's most valuable company on Wednesday. It went (2) \_\_\_\_\_ and neck for the top spot with the oil giant Exxon. At one point in the day's trading, Apple's shares went up six per cent on the Nasdaq exchange to put its (3) \_\_\_\_\_ capitalisation at \$446 billion. This was higher than Exxon's \$417 billion valuation. However, at the close of trading, Exxon was up half a percentage (4) \_\_\_\_\_ at \$418 billion, (5) \_\_\_\_\_ ahead of Apple, which went down to \$416 billion. Apple's figures were buoyed by news of its record profits in the last quarter of 2011. It made \$13 billion in profit (6) \_\_\_\_\_ \$46 billion in sales. Analysts predict Apple will soon overtake Exxon.

Apple's success has been (7) \_\_\_\_\_. It was struggling to make a profit fifteen years ago but experienced an incredible (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of fortunes after co-founder Steve Jobs took over as CEO in 1997. He turned the company round with iconic products like the iPod, iMac, iPhone and iPad, which helped the company's profits (9) \_\_\_\_\_. The past three months is one of the most profitable ever for an American company. In that (10) \_\_\_\_\_, it overtook Hewlett Packard as the world's biggest computer maker and took (11) \_\_\_\_\_ more revenue than Google. Apple's profit per employee now exceeds \$400,000 a year. The introduction of the iCloud and soaring demand for the iPhone 5 this year should see the company's value continue to (12) \_\_\_\_\_.

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |               |               |               |                |
|-----|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1.  | (a) briefs    | (b) briefed   | (c) brief     | (d) briefly    |
| 2.  | (a) neck      | (b) chest     | (c) back      | (d) head       |
| 3.  | (a) store     | (b) market    | (c) products  | (d) budget     |
| 4.  | (a) per cent  | (b) one       | (c) point     | (d) dot        |
| 5.  | (a) lightly   | (b) sprightly | (c) slightly  | (d) flighty    |
| 6.  | (a) as        | (b) on        | (c) to        | (d) in         |
| 7.  | (a) catalyst  | (b) reticent  | (c) intuitive | (d) phenomenal |
| 8.  | (a) revival   | (b) revving   | (c) reviewer  | (d) revel      |
| 9.  | (a) jumbo jet | (b) skyrocket | (c) shuttle   | (d) speedboat  |
| 10. | (a) product   | (b) project   | (c) preview   | (d) period     |
| 11. | (a) out       | (b) up        | (c) in        | (d) over       |
| 12. | (a) surge     | (b) purge     | (c) clergy    | (d) urge       |

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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 out more about Apple Inc. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. APPLE:** Make a poster about Apple. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. CEO:** Write a magazine article about Apple. Include imaginary interviews with its CEO and some customers.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to Apple CEO Tim Cook. Ask him three questions about Apple. Give him three of your opinions on Apple and its products. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

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

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. pioneering | a. cutting-edge |
| 2. briefly    | b. momentarily  |
| 3. slightly   | c. a bit        |
| 4. buoyed     | d. stimulated   |
| 5. surge      | e. rise         |
| 6. phenomenal | f. incredible   |
| 7. revival    | g. comeback     |
| 8. fortunes   | h. luck         |
| 9. period     | i. timeframe    |
| 10. soaring   | j. booming      |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                            |                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. the innovative and pioneering           | a. technology company    |
| 2. It went neck and neck                   | b. for the top spot      |
| 3. put its market capitalisation           | c. at \$446 billion      |
| 4. Exxon closed up half                    | d. a percentage point    |
| 5. buoyed by news                          | e. of its record profits |
| 6. Apple's success has been                | f. phenomenal            |
| 7. an incredible revival                   | g. of fortunes           |
| 8. iconic                                  | h. products              |
| 9. Apple's profit per employee now exceeds | i. \$400,000             |
| 10. continue                               | j. to surge              |

## GAP FILL:

### Apple briefly world's most valuable company

Apple Inc., the (1) **innovative** and pioneering technology company, was (2) **briefly** the world's most valuable company on Wednesday. It went neck and neck for the top spot with the oil (3) **giant** Exxon. At one point in the day's trading, Apple's shares went up six per cent on the Nasdaq exchange to put its (4) **market** capitalisation at \$446 billion. This was higher than Exxon's \$417 billion valuation. However, at the close of (5) **trading**, Exxon was up half a percentage point at \$418 billion, slightly ahead of Apple, which went down to \$416 billion. Apple's figures were buoyed by (6) **news** of its record profits in the last (7) **quarter** of 2011. It made \$13 billion in profit on \$46 billion in sales. Analysts (8) **predict** Apple will soon overtake Exxon.

Apple's success has been phenomenal. It was (9) **struggling** to make a profit fifteen years ago but experienced an incredible (10) **revival** of fortunes after co-founder Steve Jobs took over as CEO in 1997. He turned the company round with (11) **iconic** products like the iPod, iMac, iPhone and iPad, which helped the company's profits (12) **skyrocket**. The past three months is one of the most profitable ever for an American company. In that (13) **period**, it overtook Hewlett Packard as the world's biggest computer maker and took in more revenue than Google. Apple's profit (14) **per** employee now exceeds \$400,000 a year. The introduction of the iCloud and (15) **soaring** demand for the iPhone 5 this year should see the company's value continue to (16) **surge**.

## LANGUAGE WORK

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

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