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Afghanistan sitting on \$1 trillion of minerals

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/100616-minerals.html>

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THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/100616-minerals.html>

A new study from the United States Geological Survey reports that Afghanistan has at least \$1 trillion in mineral resources. This is welcome news for Afghans, whose current biggest money-earner is opium. Underground minerals could change the fortunes of the country. The Pentagon said Afghanistan could become one of the world's most important mining centres. There are huge quantities of the metal lithium, which is a key raw material of batteries. A Pentagon spokesperson said Afghanistan could become the "Saudi Arabia of lithium". Jawad Omar, a spokesman for Afghan President Karzai, called the report "the best news we have had for many years". He added: "This will drastically improve the lives of the Afghan people, their economic status, and it will unite them".

Mr Omar said bidding for rights to mine the minerals could begin in as little as six months. The process could present many problems for the government. Neighbouring countries and Afghan warlords might all want a stake in the wealth. Many of the reserves are in Taliban strongholds. This will make it difficult to build the roads and provide the security necessary for the mining to take place. Another problem will be the safe transportation of millions of tons of minerals. Afghanistan is a landlocked country and the nearest ports are thousands of miles away. Trucks or trains would have to cross dangerous border crossings. The Al Jazeera news agency also reports that corruption will be a key concern. It says Afghanistan's ministry of mines has a reputation of being one of the country's most corrupt institutions.

WARM-UPS

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

mineral resources / opium / mining / batteries / raw materials / good news / unity / bidding / warlords / a stake in the wealth / security / border crossings / key concerns

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

3. MONEY EARNERS: What are the good and bad things about these sources of income for countries? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

	good	bad
Minerals		
Oil		
Tourism		
Manufacturing		
Financial services		
Agriculture		

4. AFGHANISTAN: Students A **strongly** believe Afghanistan will be a safe and prosperous country one day; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. PROBLEMS: What are the biggest problems for Afghanistan? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- corruption
- Taliban
- opium
- America
- history
- Afghanistan's neighbours
- tribal disagreements
- being landlocked

6. RESOURCES: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'resources'. 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/100616-minerals.html>

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

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. An American report confirms Afghanistan is rich in mineral reserves. | T / F |
| b. Afghanistan currently earns most of its money from opium. | T / F |
| c. Afghanistan makes huge quantities of batteries. | T / F |
| d. The Afghan president said this news is the best his country ever had. | T / F |
| e. Companies will soon start making bids to mine for the minerals. | T / F |
| f. Countries bordering Afghanistan may want a share of the profits. | T / F |
| g. Moving the minerals out of Afghanistan will be very easy. | T / F |
| h. The department responsible for Afghanistan's mines has a good image. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. survey | a. amounts |
| 2. current | b. join |
| 3. quantities | c. dishonesty |
| 4. drastically | d. study |
| 5. unite | e. non-coastal |
| 6. bidding | f. considerably |
| 7. stake | g. image |
| 8. landlocked | h. present |
| 9. corruption | i. submitting proposals |
| 10. reputation | j. share |

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

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. This is welcome | a. had for many years |
| 2. change the fortunes | b. landlocked country |
| 3. a key raw | c. a stake |
| 4. the best news we have | d. news for Afghans |
| 5. drastically improve the | e. of the country |
| 6. bidding for rights to | f. concern |
| 7. warlords might all want | g. mine the minerals |
| 8. Many of the reserves are in | h. material of batteries |
| 9. Afghanistan is a | i. lives of the Afghan people |
| 10. corruption will be a key | j. Taliban strongholds |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/100616-minerals.html>

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

A new study from the United States Geological Survey _____ that Afghanistan has at least \$1 trillion in mineral resources. This is _____ news for Afghans, whose current biggest money-earner is opium. Underground minerals could change the _____ of the country. The Pentagon said Afghanistan could become one of the world's most important mining centres. There are _____ quantities of the metal lithium, which is a key _____ material of batteries. A Pentagon spokesperson said Afghanistan could become the "Saudi Arabia of lithium". Jawad Omar, a spokesman for Afghan President Karzai, called the report "the best news we have had for many years". He added: "This will drastically _____ the lives of the Afghan people, their economic _____, and it will _____ them".

Mr Omar said bidding for _____ to mine the minerals could begin in as little as six months. The _____ could present many problems for the government. Neighbouring countries and Afghan warlords might all want a _____ in the wealth. Many of the reserves are in Taliban strongholds. This will make it difficult to build the roads and _____ the security necessary for the mining to take place. Another problem will be the safe transportation of millions of tons of minerals. Afghanistan is a _____ country and the nearest _____ are thousands of miles away. Trucks or trains would have to cross dangerous _____ crossings. The Al Jazeera news agency also reports that corruption will be a key concern. It says Afghanistan's ministry of mines has a _____ of being one of the country's most corrupt institutions.

raw
status
fortunes
improve
reports
welcome
unite
huge

provide
reputation
process
ports
stake
rights
border
landlocked

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

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A new study from the United States _____ that Afghanistan has at least \$1 trillion in mineral resources. This is welcome news for Afghans, _____ money-earner is opium. Underground minerals could _____ the country. The Pentagon said Afghanistan could become one of the world's most important mining centres. There _____ of the metal lithium, which is a key raw material of batteries. A Pentagon spokesperson said Afghanistan could become the "Saudi Arabia of lithium". Jawad Omar, a spokesman for Afghan President Karzai, called the report "the best news we have had for many years". He added: "This _____ the lives of the Afghan people, their economic status, _____".

Mr Omar said _____ mine the minerals could begin in as little as six months. The process could present many problems for the government. Neighbouring countries and Afghan warlords might all want a _____. Many of the reserves are in Taliban strongholds. This will make it difficult to build the roads and provide the security _____ to take place. Another problem will be the safe transportation of millions of tons of minerals. Afghanistan is a landlocked country and _____ thousands of miles away. Trucks or trains would have to cross dangerous border crossings. The Al Jazeera news agency also reports that corruption _____. It says Afghanistan's ministry of mines has a reputation of being one of the country's _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/100616-minerals.html>

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

mineral	resource
----------------	-----------------

- 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">• least• welcome• fortunes• raw• many• status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• rights• stake• provide• ports• border• key
--	---

STUDENT MINERALS SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/100616-minerals.html>

Write five GOOD questions about minerals 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.

AFGHANISTAN 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 'Afghanistan'?
- c) How good is this news for Afghanistan?
- d) Do you think the minerals will make life for Afghan people better?
- e) What could the \$1 trillion do for Afghanistan?
- f) Do you think the resources will put an end to opium growing?
- g) What do you think of the phrase "the Saudi Arabia of lithium"?
- h) What do you think ordinary Afghans will make of this news?
- i) Could the resources really unite the Afghan people?
- j) Do the resources in your country help you have a better life?

Afghanistan sitting on \$1 trillion of minerals - 17th June, 2010
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AFGHANISTAN DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Foreign companies will win the mining rights, which means lots of the money disappearing from Afghanistan. How will this help Afghans?
- c) Do you think the minerals will create problems in the region?
- d) How much of a target would the mines be for the Taliban?
- e) Should the Taliban be involved in the mining?
- f) What's the best way to transport the minerals out of Afghanistan?
- g) What can be done about the problem of corruption?
- h) Do you think the minerals will change Afghanistan in any way?
- i) What do you think Afghanistan will be like 20 years from now?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Afghan President Hamid Karzai?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/100616-minerals.html>

A new study from the United States Geological Survey (1) ____ that Afghanistan has at least \$1 trillion in mineral resources. This is (2) ____ news for Afghans, whose current biggest money-earner is opium. Underground minerals could change the (3) ____ of the country. The Pentagon said Afghanistan could become one of the world's most important mining centres. There are huge (4) ____ of the metal lithium, which is a key raw material of batteries. A Pentagon spokesperson said Afghanistan could become the "Saudi Arabia of lithium". Jawad Omar, a spokesman for Afghan President Karzai, called the report "the best news we have had for many years". He added: "This will drastically (5) ____ the lives of the Afghan people, their economic status, and it will (6) ____ them".

Mr Omar said bidding for rights to mine the minerals could begin in as (7) ____ as six months. The process could present many problems for the government. Neighbouring countries and Afghan warlords might all want a (8) ____ in the wealth. Many of the reserves are in Taliban strongholds. This will make it difficult to build the roads and (9) ____ the security necessary for the mining to take place. Another problem will be the safe transportation of millions of tons of minerals. Afghanistan is a landlocked country and the nearest (10) ____ are thousands of miles away. Trucks or trains would have to cross dangerous border crossings. The Al Jazeera news agency also reports that corruption will be a (11) ____ concern. It says Afghanistan's ministry of mines has a reputation of (12) ____ one of the country's most corrupt institutions.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) reports | (b) reporting | (c) repeat | (d) repeating |
| 2. | (a) welcomes | (b) welcome | (c) welcomed | (d) well |
| 3. | (a) fortunate | (b) fortunately | (c) fortunes | (d) tunes |
| 4. | (a) quantity | (b) qualities | (c) quantifies | (d) quantities |
| 5. | (a) improving | (b) improvement | (c) improves | (d) improve |
| 6. | (a) union | (b) unity | (c) unite | (d) unties |
| 7. | (a) little | (b) small | (c) tiny | (d) less |
| 8. | (a) stack | (b) stake | (c) streak | (d) steak |
| 9. | (a) proviso | (b) provision | (c) provide | (d) providing |
| 10. | (a) ports | (b) parts | (c) plants | (d) pants |
| 11. | (a) lock | (b) chain | (c) safe | (d) key |
| 12. | (a) doing | (b) being | (c) trying | (d) giving |

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 Afghanistan's minerals. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

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

4. AFGGHANISTAN Write a magazine article about the future of Afghanistan. Include imaginary interviews with an Afghan and a mining company exec.

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 Afghan President Hamid Karzai. Ask him three questions about the minerals. Give him three suggestions on how to use the wealth to help ordinary Afghans. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. survey | a. study |
| 2. current | b. present |
| 3. quantities | c. amounts |
| 4. drastically | d. considerably |
| 5. unite | e. join |
| 6. bidding | f. submitting proposals |
| 7. stake | g. share |
| 8. landlocked | h. non-coastal |
| 9. corruption | i. dishonesty |
| 10. reputation | j. image |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. This is welcome | a. news for Afghans |
| 2. change the fortunes | b. of the country |
| 3. a key raw | c. material of batteries |
| 4. the best news we have | d. had for many years |
| 5. drastically improve the | e. lives of the Afghan people |
| 6. bidding for rights to | f. mine the minerals |
| 7. warlords might all want | g. a stake |
| 8. Many of the reserves are in | h. Taliban strongholds |
| 9. Afghanistan is a | i. landlocked country |
| 10. corruption will be a key | j. concern |

GAP FILL:

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LANGUAGE WORK

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

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