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The Breaking News English.com Resource Book

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Obama: BP must pay for oil spill clean-up

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

American President Barack Obama has said the oil giant British Petroleum (BP) is responsible for paying for cleaning up the huge oil spill off America's southern coast. The oil slick is now the size of Jamaica and has started washing up on beaches in Louisiana. Obama told reporters that BP "is ultimately responsible under the law for paying the costs of response and cleanup operations". US Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano echoed her boss' words. She called on BP to take urgent action to send resources to tackle the disaster. BP's CEO Tony Hayward is in the area to personally direct the emergency mop-up and damage limitation exercise. President Obama has also visited the area.

The catastrophe began last week when a BP offshore oil rig exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico. As much as 5,000 barrels of oil a day are now pouring into the sea. Experts believe it is on its way to becoming the worst oil spill in U.S. history. Even worse than the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster. The spill could cause enormous environmental and economic damage to the southern U.S. states. Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi have all called a state of emergency. One of the biggest problems is the difficulty of cleaning up the oil. The affected coastline is full of wetlands that are difficult to reach by boat. Hundreds of different species are under threat including very rare bird and marine life.

WARM-UPS

1. OIL SPILLS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about oil spills. 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.

oil giants / beaches / cleanup operations / responsibility / tackling disasters / damage / oil rigs / barrels of oil / environmental damage / economic damage / species

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

3. OIL SPILL DAMAGE: How bad is it? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you heard.

	How bad?	How to correct the damage
Marine life		
Bird life		
Local economy		
Fishing industry		
Economic damage		
BP's image		

4. OIL: Students A **strongly** believe we can live without oil; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? Rank these according to who's most responsible for the oil spill and share your rankings with your partner. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- BP's CEO
- All of us for using so much oil
- Whoever allowed the oil rig to drill
- The oil rig operations manager
- The makers of the oil rig
- No one
- President Obama
- The safety inspectors

6. RESPONSIBLE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'responsible'. 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/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

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

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. The U.S. president has said BP is responsible for oil-spill cleanup costs. | T / F |
| b. The oil spill has reached as far as Jamaica in the Caribbean. | T / F |
| c. BP is not legally responsible for paying for the cleanup. | T / F |
| d. BP's CEO is nowhere to be seen. | T / F |
| e. Over 5,000 barrels of oil a day are spilling into the ocean. | T / F |
| f. The article says the spill is now the biggest in U.S. history. | T / F |
| g. Four different states have declared emergencies. | T / F |
| h. The areas affected by the spill are not easy to reach. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. cleaning up | a. get to |
| 2. responsible | b. seconded |
| 3. ultimately | c. spilling |
| 4. echoed | d. activity |
| 5. exercise | e. in the end |
| 6. catastrophe | f. specialists |
| 7. pouring | g. endangered |
| 8. experts | h. mopping up |
| 9. reach | i. at fault |
| 10. under threat | j. disaster |

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. responsible for paying | a. pouring into the sea |
| 2. The oil slick is now the | b. responsible under the law |
| 3. BP is ultimately | c. are under threat |
| 4. Napolitano echoed | d. damage limitation exercise |
| 5. direct the emergency mop-up and | e. and economic damage |
| 6. a BP offshore oil rig exploded | f. for cleaning up |
| 7. 5,000 barrels of oil a day are now | g. emergency |
| 8. cause enormous environmental | h. size of Jamaica |
| 9. a state of | i. her boss' words |
| 10. Hundreds of different species | j. and sank in the Gulf |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

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

American President Barack Obama has said the oil _____
British Petroleum (BP) is responsible for paying for cleaning up the _____
_____ oil spill off America's southern coast. The oil slick is
now the _____ of Jamaica and has started washing up on
beaches in Louisiana. Obama told reporters that BP "is ultimately
responsible _____ the law for paying the costs of
response and cleanup operations". US Homeland Security
Secretary Janet Napolitano _____ her boss' words. She
called on BP to take urgent action to send _____ to
_____ the disaster. BP's CEO Tony Hayward is in the area
to personally direct the emergency _____-up and
damage limitation exercise. President Obama has also visited the
area.

tackle
echoed
size
resources
giant
mop
huge
under

The catastrophe _____ last week when a BP offshore oil
rig exploded and _____ in the Gulf of Mexico. As much as
5,000 barrels of oil a day are now pouring into the sea. Experts
believe it is on its way to becoming the _____ oil spill in
U.S. history. Even worse than the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster. The
spill _____ cause enormous environmental and economic
damage to the southern U.S. states. Alabama, Florida, Louisiana
and Mississippi have all called a _____ of emergency.
One of the biggest problems is the difficulty of _____ up
the oil. The affected coastline is full of wetlands that are difficult to
_____ by boat. Hundreds of different species are under
threat including very rare bird and _____ life.

cleaning
could
sank
reach
began
marine
worst
state

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

American President Barack Obama _____ British Petroleum (BP) is responsible _____ up the huge oil spill off America's southern coast. The oil slick is now the size of Jamaica and has started washing up on beaches in Louisiana. Obama told reporters that BP "is ultimately responsible _____ paying the costs of response and cleanup operations". US Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano _____. She called on BP to take urgent action to send resources to tackle the disaster. BP's CEO Tony Hayward is in the area to personally direct the emergency mop-up _____ exercise. President Obama _____ area.

The catastrophe _____ a BP offshore oil rig exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico. As much as 5,000 _____ are now pouring into the sea. Experts believe it is on its way to becoming the worst oil spill in U.S. history. _____ 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster. The _____ enormous environmental and economic damage to the southern U.S. states. Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi have all called a state of emergency. One of the biggest problems _____ cleaning up the oil. The affected coastline is full of wetlands that are difficult to reach by boat. Hundreds of different species are under threat including _____ marine life.

Obama: BP must pay for oil spill clean-up – 2nd May, 2010

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AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

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

oil	spill

- 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">• giant• size• under• urgent• tackle• visited	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sank• 5,000• worst• cause• affected• rare
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

STUDENT OIL SPILL SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1005/100502-oil_spill.html

Write five GOOD questions about oil spills 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.

OIL SPILLS 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 phrase 'oil spill'?
- c) What do you think of the Louisiana oil spill?
- d) Who's responsibility is the cleanup?
- e) Do you think anyone should be punished for this oil spill?
- f) Do you think BP is doing enough to protect wildlife and beaches?
- g) What should President Obama do about this situation?
- h) What should BP do to compensate everyone affected?
- i) Do you think offshore oil drilling should be stopped?
- j) What can the world do without oil?

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OIL SPILLS DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What three adjectives would you use to describe the oil spill?
- c) Do you think the world should boycott BP?
- d) How would you feel if you lived in the affected area?
- e) What is the biggest damage the spill can cause?
- f) Should laws regarding oil drilling change after this catastrophe?
- g) Do you think humans will eventually destroy our entire environment?
- h) Do you agree with the idea of an environment tax on oil products?
- i) If you were a Louisiana fisherman, what would you say to BP's CEO?
- j) What questions would you like to ask BP's CEO?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1005/100505-oil_spill.html

American President Barack Obama has said the oil (1)_____ British Petroleum (BP) is responsible for paying for cleaning up the huge oil spill (2)_____ America's southern coast. The oil slick is now the size of Jamaica and has started washing up on beaches in Louisiana. Obama told reporters that BP "is (3)_____ responsible under the law for paying the costs of response and cleanup operations". US Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano (4)_____ her boss' words. She called (5)_____ BP to take urgent action to send resources to tackle the disaster. BP's CEO Tony Hayward is in the area to personally direct the emergency (6)_____ -up and damage limitation exercise. President Obama has also visited the area.

The catastrophe began last week when a BP (7)_____ oil rig exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico. As much as 5,000 barrels of oil a day are now pouring into the sea. Experts believe it is on its (8)_____ to becoming the worst oil spill in U.S. history. (9)_____ worse than the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster. The spill could cause enormous environmental and economic damage to the southern U.S. states. Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi have all called a (10)_____ of emergency. One of the biggest problems is the difficulty o(11)_____ cleaning up the oil. The affected coastline is full of wetlands that are difficult to reach by boat. Hundreds of different species are (12)_____ threat including very rare bird and marine life.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) gigantic | (b) huge | (c) enormous | (d) giant |
| 2. | (a) off | (b) at | (c) in | (d) up |
| 3. | (a) ultimate | (b) ultimately | (c) ultimatum | (d) ultimatums |
| 4. | (a) shouted | (b) agreed | (c) echoed | (d) talked |
| 5. | (a) in | (b) at | (c) on | (d) to |
| 6. | (a) top | (b) mop | (c) hop | (d) pop |
| 7. | (a) shoreline | (b) shore | (c) onshore | (d) offshore |
| 8. | (a) way | (b) weighs | (c) ways | (d) weight |
| 9. | (a) Never | (b) Even | (c) Evens | (d) Ever |
| 10. | (a) city | (b) county | (c) town | (d) state |
| 11. | (a) by | (b) to | (c) of | (d) at |
| 12. | (a) under | (b) beneath | (c) below | (d) bottom |

Obama: BP must pay for oil spill clean-up – 2nd May, 2010

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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 the Louisiana oil spill. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. OIL SPILLS: Make a poster about oil spills. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. RESPONSIBILITY: Write a magazine article about the Louisiana oil spill and whose fault it was. Include imaginary interviews with a BP executive and a local Louisiana fisherman.

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 the boss of BP. Ask him three questions about the Louisiana oil spill. Give him three ideas on what to do about the cleanup. 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. F e. T f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. cleaning up | a. mopping up |
| 2. responsible | b. at fault |
| 3. ultimately | c. in the end |
| 4. echoed | d. seconded |
| 5. exercise | e. activity |
| 6. catastrophe | f. disaster |
| 7. pouring | g. spilling |
| 8. experts | h. specialists |
| 9. reach | i. get to |
| 10. under threat | j. endangered |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. responsible for paying | a. for cleaning up |
| 2. The oil slick is now the | b. size of Jamaica |
| 3. BP is ultimately | c. responsible under the law |
| 4. Napolitano echoed | d. her boss' words |
| 5. direct the emergency mop-up and | e. damage limitation exercise |
| 6. a BP offshore oil rig exploded | f. and sank in the Gulf |
| 7. 5,000 barrels of oil a day are now | g. pouring into the sea |
| 8. cause enormous environmental | h. and economic damage |
| 9. a state of | i. emergency |
| 10. Hundreds of different species | j. are under threat |

GAP FILL:

Obama: BP must pay for oil spill clean-up

American President Barack Obama has said the oil **giant** British Petroleum (BP) is responsible for paying for cleaning up the **huge** oil spill off America's southern coast. The oil slick is now the **size** of Jamaica and has started washing up on beaches in Louisiana. Obama told reporters that BP "is ultimately responsible **under** the law for paying the costs of response and cleanup operations". US Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano **echoed** her boss' words. She called on BP to take urgent action to send **resources** to **tackle** the disaster. BP's CEO Tony Hayward is in the area to personally direct the emergency **mop-up** and damage limitation exercise. President Obama has also visited the area.

The catastrophe **began** last week when a BP offshore oil rig exploded and **sank** in the Gulf of Mexico. As much as 5,000 barrels of oil a day are now pouring into the sea. Experts believe it is on its way to becoming the **worst** oil spill in U.S. history. Even worse than the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster. The spill **could** cause enormous environmental and economic damage to the southern U.S. states. Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi have all called a **state** of emergency. One of the biggest problems is the difficulty of **cleaning up** the oil. The affected coastline is full of wetlands that are difficult to **reach** by boat. Hundreds of different species are under threat including very rare bird and **marine** life.

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