New Mexico President takes 60% pay cut

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Mexico's president-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador is leading by example in his country's austerity drive. He said he would accept less than half the salary of his predecessor when he takes office in December. This is part of an austerity drive to get Mexico's economy back on track. Mr Obrador told reporters on Sunday that: "What we want is for the budget to reach everybody." This means he will take home a salary of around $5,700 a month. This is just 40 per cent of the salary currently earned by incumbent President Enrique Peña Nieto. In addition, the president-elect said no public official would be able to earn more than he will. His supporters greatly welcomed his new austerity measures.

Mr Obrador said he wanted to cut his salary even further to play his part in helping the economy. He stopped at a 60 per cent cut because he thought a bigger cut would reduce the quality of people joining his government. Many are leaving well-paid positions in the private sector to take up ministerial posts that have a low salary ceiling. However, he said he would stand firm on his campaign promise to rein in perks given to high-level government officials. He said there would be cutbacks on chauffeurs, bodyguards and health insurance for ministers. Other measures he will introduce are to turn the official presidential residence into a cultural center and to stop pension payments to former presidents.

Sources: latimes.com / *thehill.com* / *foxnews.com*

Writing

Everyone should take a pay cut to help their government. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

president / example / half / salary / austerity / budget / incumbent / public official / play a part / quality / government / ceiling / perks / bodyguards / residence / pension

True / False

a) Mexico's new president will teach people how to drive. T / F

b) Mexico's new president wants to backtrack on the economy. T / F

c) Mr Obrador wants everyone to take a pay cut. T / F

d) Mr Obrador said no public official would earn more than him. T / F

e) Mr Obrador wanted to take a pay cut that was bigger than 60%. T / F

f) Ministerial jobs in Mexico will have a high salary ceiling. T / F

g) Mr Obrador will reduce the number of chauffeurs for ministers. T / F

h) The presidential residence will be turned into a cultural center. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

1.	**drive**	a.	initiate
2.	**take home**	b.	actions
3.	**incumbent**	c.	previous
4.	**welcomed**	d.	earn
5.	**measures**	e.	current
6.	**promise**	f.	benefits
7.	**perks**	g.	campaign
8.	**introduce**	h.	home
9.	**residence**	i.	pledge
10.	**former**	j.	greeted

Discussion – Student A

a) What do you think of Mr Obrador's pay cut?

b) How much should a country's president earn?

c) Should business leaders earn more than national leaders?

d) Should we all take a pay cut to help the government?

e) What should leaders do to lead by example?

f) How can we all help in austerity drives?

g) What is the most money anyone should be allowed to earn?

h) What do you think of your country's leader?

Phrase Match

1. Lopez Obrador is leading
2. austerity
3. less than half the salary
4. he will take home a salary of
5. His supporters greatly welcomed his new
6. play his part
7. a bigger cut would
8. stand firm on his campaign
9. presidential
10. pension

a. promise
b. austerity measures
c. reduce the quality
d. payments
e. of his predecessor
f. residence
g. by example
h. in helping the economy
i. drive
j. around $5,700 a month

Discussion – Student B

a) What do you think about what you read?
b) When have you led by example?
c) What makes a good national leader?
d) Is it better to work in the private or public sector?
e) Do government ministers get too many perks?
f) Why do government ministers need a chauffeur?
g) Should former presidents still get pension payments?
h) What questions would you like to ask Mr Obrador?

Spelling

1. Obrador is <u>leaignd</u> by example
2. in his country's <u>rtstaeyui</u> drive
3. half the salary of his <u>opedcsresre</u>
4. for the <u>tebgud</u> to reach everybody
5. earned by <u>ncuenmitb</u> President Enrique
6. His <u>rsoertppsu</u> greatly welcomed...
7. take up <u>aiestlmrnii</u> posts
8. stand firm on his <u>gacianpm</u> promise
9. there would be cutbacks on <u>uacuferfsh</u>
10. health <u>scurnenia</u>
11. the official presidential <u>cisenedre</u>
12. stop <u>nosienp</u> payments

Role Play

Role A – Free Lunches
You think free lunches are the best perks of the job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't as good with their perks. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these perks (and why): gym membership, a company car or shares.

Role B – Gym Membership
You think gym membership is the best perk of the job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't as good with their perks. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these perks (and why): free lunches, a company car or shares.

Role C – Company Car
You think a company car is the best perk of the job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't as good with their perks. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these perks (and why): gym membership, free lunches or shares.

Role D – Shares
You think shares are the best perks of the job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't as good with their perks. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these perks (and why): gym membership, a company car or free lunches.

Speaking – Perks

Rank these with your partner. Put the best perks of the job at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- company housing
- travel allowance
- discounts
- company car
- chauffeur
- free lunch
- gym membership
- shares

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. e	4. j	5. b
6. i	7. f	8. a	9. h	10. c

Answers – True False

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

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.