BIDEN AND HARRIS TAKE THE WHITE HOUSE

Source: Reuters

1 Warm up

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have won the 2020 US presidential elections, with historically high levels of voter turnout.

1. Why are the voters in this photo holding these signs?
2. What do you know about Joe Biden and Kamala Harris?

Source: Reuters

2 Watch for main idea

Watch the news report in your Classroom ; "Joe Biden is the next president of the United States" and make notes about these points:

Set 1

a. Three things that Biden plans to do

b. Four groups of people who voted for Biden

c. Five "firsts" for Kamala Harris

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Set 2

a. The significance of these numbers: 77, 47, 30

b. What Biden is NOT going to do

c. Two important numbers that describe the effects of the pandemic in the US

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- **Tell your partner what you wrote in your notes.**
- **Is there anything you heard that was surprising or interesting?**

3 Watch for detail

Read the sentences from the news report and remember/predict the missing words. The words you write will have the same or similar meaning as the words in bold. The first letters of the missing words have been given. Watch the report again to check. Write FULL words, please.

After one of the most p_____[1] **(causing something to divide into two groups with completely different points of view)** and drawn-out presidential elections in U.S. history, the race was called for Democrat Joe Biden on Saturday – despite pending lawsuits from Republican i_____[2] **(the person who currently holds an official position)** Donald Trump. Voters ultimately embraced Biden's promise of a renewed effort to combat the coronavirus pandemic, fix the economy, and bridge America's political divide after four t_____[3] **(full of change and confusion)** years of Trump's leadership. At 77, Biden became the oldest person ever to be elected to the nation's highest office – and won the most votes ever c_____[4] **(made)** for a president. Winning the White House would be the p_____[5] **(the most successful position possible to attain)** for any politician, but it's particularly special for Biden, says Reuters political correspondent James Oliphant.

"This is his 47th year in politics, he's run for president three times – he never really got out of the starting gate the first two times – so it's a lot of v_____[6] **(proof that someone's action was a good idea after a long time when no one believed this)** for a guy who was counted out a zillion times, even during the 2020 campaign." Biden – who spent more than 30 years in the U.S. Senate and served as vice president under Trump's p_____[7] **(the last person who occupied a position)** Barack Obama – will now look for ways to bring people together as he inherits a nation in t_____[8] **(confusion and disorder).** And so, if you're looking at the fact that a 77-year-old white guy got elected president and think that the country is maybe moving backwards after we just had Donald Trump, a Vice President Harris does a lot to d_____ that n_____[9] **(prove that idea wrong).** A U.S. senator from California, Harris has a track record of shattering glass ceilings. She served as San Francisco's first female district attorney and was California's first woman of color to be elected attorney general. He has promised to improve access to testing and, unlike Trump, to h_____[10] **(pay close attention to)** the advice of leading public health officials and scientists.

Give some examples:

1. The **incumbent** leader in your country, and their **predecessor.**
2. An issue that often **polarizes** opinion.
3. A time when your actions were **vindicated.**
4. What you would consider the **pinnacle** of achievement in your English studies.
5. A **tumultuous** period of history when there was **turmoil** in your country.

4 Vocabulary in context

Look at the underlined phrases in the last exercise and answer the questions. Use the context of the report to help you.

Which three phrases are sports metaphors? Write a definition for these phrases.

- _____ 1

- _____ 2

- _____ 3

Which phrase relates to women's achievements in politics or business? Write a definition for this phrase.

- _____ 4

Which phrase is an exaggeration? Write a definition for this phrase.

- _____ 5

Give some personal examples:

1. A **close race** that you saw **being called.**
2. A time when you started a project and had difficulty **getting out of the starting gate.**
3. Someone you admire with **a great track record.**
4. A politician or famous person in your country who has **shattered glass ceilings.**
5. Something you've told a family member, friend, or colleague **a zillion times,** but they never seem to remember.

5 Talking point

Work in pairs or small groups to answer these questions.

1. Do you think Joe Biden has the experience he needs to perform well as President in these polarised times?
2. Why do you think Joe Biden chose Kamala Harris as his vice-president? Give as many reasons as you can think of.
3. Why do you think Donald Trump has not heeded the advice of scientists about the coronavirus pandemic? Have his policies been vindicated?
4. The report mentions that there are legal battles ahead. What sort of legal battles do you think these are, and what will the results be?
5. Will you be watching Joe Biden and Kamal Harris on TV when they take office on January 20, 2021? Why/not?