

CURRENT

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Hi and welcome to a new series of CURRENT!

Did you know that it has been 50 years since the Beatles were formed? CURRENT looks at their story. The UK coalition government is trying to improve the NHS and get more young people into work. CURRENT looks at how they want to do this but discovers that not everything is going to plan!

As well as the great articles in the magazine, there is further material online. And from now on, the listening material is on CD and online. Check it out!

Please get in touch if you have any comments on CURRENT. Hope you enjoy reading this issue!

Best wishes

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CURRENT: SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER

LANGUAGE FOCUS

- **Grammar:** Compound adjectives, adverbs used as intensifiers
- **Vocabulary:** Useful phrases in context, politics and crisis, homophones, shortened informal words, e.g. *demo*, collocations
- **Functions:** Discussion, giving advice, listening to opinions, writing a script, reading comprehension, scanning for information

PAGES 2-4: NEWS 24/7

- Specially selected news stories from around the world. Use the photographs for extra exam speaking practice.
- **Cultural input:** Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

PAGES 6-8: UP CLOSE

- **Lana Del Rey**
This article explains how American singer-songwriter shot to fame.
- **Cultural input:** U.S. boarding schools
- **Audio Track 2:** Listen to a special report on Lana del Rey.
- **Online Activities and CURRENT Extra**

PAGES 9-11: REALITY CHECK

- **'Slave labour' – or road to a job?**
CURRENT looks into a government scheme to give work experience to the young unemployed.
- **Cultural input:** Unemployment amongst young people in the UK
- **Audio Track 1:** Listen to a job seeker and employer talk about work experience schemes.
- **Online Activities and CURRENT Extra**

PAGES 12-14: CURRENT WORLD

- **The Battle for Syria**
An investigation into the Syrian situation, explaining how it started, who is involved and the devastating effect on the Syrian people.
- **Language Focus:** Politics and crisis; compound adjectives
- **Cultural input:** Syria
- **Online Activities:** ✓

PAGES 15-17: THE BUZZ

- **How teen movies conquered Hollywood**
CURRENT suggests why these teen movies have been so popular.
- **Online Activities:** ✓
- Find out more about the success of teen blockbusters.

PAGES 18-19: EVOLUTION ENGLISH

- **Spelling**
CURRENT asks *Does it matter if we spell words incorrectly?*
- **Cultural input:** English spelling
- **Language focus:** Homophones
- **Audio Track 3:** Listen to teens talking about their spelling.
- **Online Activities:** ✓

PAGES 20-21: CURRENT UNCOVERED

- **The NHS**
CURRENT explains the background to the National Health Service in the UK and why the government thinks it now has to change.
- **Cultural input:** The NHS in the UK
- **Online Activities:** ✓

PAGES 22-23: LANGUAGE CHECKPOINT

- **Language Checkpoint**
Activities to accompany the articles.

PAGE 24: FLASHPOINT

- **50 years ago: The Beatles debut!**
CURRENT looks at the Beatles' story.
- **The Beatles**
- **Language focus:** Shortened, informal words



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MAGAZINE: For fantastic ideas on how to use CURRENT magazine, the CURRENT Audio and the website, TURN OVER!



PAGES 2–4 NEWS 24/7

Students read through the articles, then discuss the following in pairs or small groups: *Which stories made you: laugh, smile, angry, cringe? Why?* Ask groups to tell the rest of the class about their reaction to one of the stories and encourage a class debate.

JUBILEE FEVER The UK had an extended Bank Holiday because of the Jubilee. Instead of the usual one day holiday on the last Monday in May, the UK had the Tuesday off as well. The long weekend gave everyone plenty of time to celebrate the Jubilee – despite the weather!

Ask students questions related to the photos: *Have you ever been in a crowd like this? What was the occasion? How do you think you would feel in this situation? Would you be at all worried? Why? Would you prefer to be at the event or to watch it on TV?*

PAGES 6–8 UP CLOSE


Audio T2

Lead-in: Write the name *Lana Del Rey* on the board and ask students what, if anything, they know about her. They can then read the article to confirm their information.

Vocabulary: Test the vocabulary in the Wordwise box by giving the students the following sentences and asking them to complete them with a word from the box on page 8. Sometimes they will have to change the form.

1. *As a teenager, Lana had terrible problems but she managed to _____ her life at boarding school.*
2. *Some music is _____ and makes you want to sleep.*
3. *Some of Lana's lyrics are dark and _____.*
4. *Some pop stars _____ on publicity but most would prefer not to be in the public eye all the time.*
5. *Have you ever _____ a new talented singer while you were surfing?*
6. *Do you think it is _____ human to want people to approve your actions?*

[Answers: 1. straighten out; 2. hypnotic; 3. sinister; 4. thrive; 5. stumbled across/on; 6. innately]

CURRENT Extra: Encourage your students to post their views on the website at www.mg-plus.net/ct12108

PAGES 9–11 REALITY CHECK



Background information: There has been a lot of discussion in the media about this scheme which aimed to give young people short-term experience in the workplace. As they were originally not paid for the work, it was considered slave labour. Some people argued that the young people should be pleased to get some experience. You might like to discuss how your students would feel if they were not paid for work.

Lead-in: Ask *Do you know how many young people are unemployed in our country?* (See page 2 for some information)

Vocabulary: Write the following in two lists on the board and ask students to match the verbs in the first column with the adjectives and nouns in the second column.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>hunt for</i> | a) <i>a debate</i> |
| 2. <i>send out</i> | b) <i>experience</i> |
| 3. <i>spark</i> | c) <i>protests</i> |
| 4. <i>became</i> | d) <i>a job</i> |
| 5. <i>lack</i> | e) <i>alarmed</i> |
| 6. <i>perform</i> | f) <i>job applications</i> |
| 7. <i>stage</i> | g) <i>lowly tasks</i> |

[Answers: 1. d; 2. f; 3. a; 4. e; 5. b; 6. g; 7. c]

Writing: Read about Angela Pace on page 9. She 'has been sending out dozens of job applications a week, with little luck'. Ask students to write her a letter giving her some advice. Remind them to use phrases such as: *You should ...; If I were you, I'd ...; Why don't you try ...ing?; Have you ...?*

Listening: Remember the audio is now online (www.mg-plus.net/audio) and on CD.

PAGES 12–14 PHOTO REPORT



Lead-in: Ask students to say what they know of the events in Syria from the news. They can compare this with the article in CURRENT and see how the situation has changed since the magazine went to print.

Reading comprehension Give students the following exercise. Advise them to skim through the article, then read the sentences before they read the article again carefully.

Read the article on Syria. For questions 1–10, choose from the sections A–E. The sections may be chosen more than once.

A From school to social networks B Protests and crackdown C The 'Free Syrian Army'
D Daily life E Syria's future

In which section of the article are the following mentioned?

1. The desire to get rid of the Assad regime came from outside Syria, as well as inside.
2. The countries in the UN agreed to impose sanctions on Syria.
3. Some possible new governments in Syria might not be popular in the West.
4. The government punished students who wrote anti-government messages on their school walls.
5. The group of men fighting against the Assad regime is not well trained.
6. The President agreed to some changes early this year.
7. The rebel army probably needs help from other countries to beat Assad's army.
8. It will take a long time for Syria to recover from this situation.
9. Social media helped to encourage the Syrian people to rise against their government.
10. Thousands of Syrians no longer live in Syria.

[Answers: 1B, 2D, 3E, 4A, 5C, 6B, 7C, 8E, 9A, 10D]

Grammar (compound adjectives): Ask students to read the sub-title for the article and tell you the compound adjective (*fast-changing*). Explain that if we didn't use compound adjectives, we would have to say: *With news that is changing so quickly ...* . It is far more efficient (and more effective) to use the compound adjective! Point out that compound adjectives are usually hyphenated. Give them the following from the article to change:

1. a protest in favour of democracy
2. a protest against the government
3. an election with more than one party
4. a civil war involving all the people
5. a Syria led by Sunnis

[Answers: 1. pro-democracy protest; 2. anti-government protest 3. multi-party elections 4. an all-out civil war 5. a Sunni-led Syria]

PAGES 15–17 THE BUZZ



Lead-in: In small groups, students discuss their favourite Hollywood films, explaining why they liked them. Each group reports back to the rest of the class what their four favourite films are. Find out if there is any agreement. Ask *Were any of the films based on books. If so, did you read the books before you saw the films? Do you like to read the book first?*

Reading: Divide the class into five groups and after reading the introduction together, give each group one of CURRENT's 'magic rules'. Ask them to read it and summarise it for the rest of the class. They have to agree this amongst themselves before telling the class. They should be able to get it down to about 20 words.

Discussion: Ask students to look at the three new books. Ask *Which one do you think will make the best film and why?* Students discuss in pairs and then report back to the rest of the class. They could also suggest who might act in the lead roles.

CURRENT TV: Watch CURRENT TV with your students. Use the exercises supplied online. Go to www.mg-plus.net/videos

PAGES 18–19 EVOLUTION ENGLISH



Background information: The word 'Spelling' in the title is made up from Scrabble tiles – a good game for your students to play to help improve their vocabulary.

Lead in: Ask *When do you think spelling is very important?* (e.g. in exams, job applications, etc.) *When doesn't it matter?* (Students might think, for example, that text speak is OK.) *Do you find English spelling difficult? Are there some words that you always get wrong?* Advise the students to keep a note of their spelling mistakes and to read through the corrected words at regular intervals. Once they are sure of a spelling, they can remove that word from their lists.

Spelling (homophones): One problem with English is the number of homophones – words which sound the same but have a different spelling and meaning. Ask the students to work in pairs or small groups. Give each group one of the following and ask them to write sentences to show the difference: pair – pear; witch – which; mail – male; break – brake; some – sum; sun – son; great – grate; their – there; maid – made; rain-reign.

Please note that these are the way they are pronounced in RP. If, for example, you were in the north of England or in Scotland, *pair* and *pear* would not be pronounced in the same way.

CURRENT Extra: Ask students to visit the CURRENT website and do the spelling quiz (www.mg-plus.net/ct13121).

PAGES 20–21 CURRENT UNCOVERED

Background information: Although all medical care is free in the UK, we have to pay a set amount for any medicine on prescription. At the moment, each item on a prescription is £7.65, no matter how much has been prescribed or how much it actually costs the NHS. Some people have private medical care, particularly through companies they work for and in this case the insurance companies pay. Patients are usually seen by a specialist more quickly if they have medical insurance, although all emergencies are seen quickly in the NHS. It is considered too expensive for most people to have private medical insurance.

Lead-in: Ask *When you are ill, who do you go to see? Do you always go to the same doctor? Do you have to pay? Do you think you should have to pay? Should everyone pay? Do you have to pay for prescriptions? Is it a fair amount?*

Reading comprehension: Give students the following from the article. Students find them and explain their significance in the article:

1. July 5th, 1948
2. 1.7 million
3. £106 billion
4. 20,000
5. 1990s
6. World War II

[Answers: 1. The date the NHS was founded.; 2. The number of employees in the NHS; 3. The budget for the NHS in 2012; 4. The number of management and administration jobs to be cut in the shake-up; 5. The last major change to the NHS – the introduction of Primary Care Trusts; 6. When the pre-cursor to the NHS was set up]

PAGE 24 FLASHPOINT

Background information: Two of the four Beatles have died – in 1980 John Lennon was shot dead by Mark Chapman (there are photos of Lennon signing an album cover for Chapman hours before he shot him. Chapman is still in prison.) and in 2001, George Harrison died of cancer, aged 58. Ringo Starr is still performing as is Sir Paul McCartney.

Lead-in: Ask *Who am I talking about? This group came to fame in the 1960s. It started with five members and finally ended up with four. They all came from Liverpool but also played in clubs in Hamburg in Germany. Two of the members are now dead. One is still making music and has been knighted.*

Vocabulary: Ask students to look at the second last paragraph and find the word *demo*. Explain that this is an informal word. Ask *What do you think it is short for? (demonstration – in this case, a piece of music a new singer or group sends to a record company. We would always use it in its shortened form for this meaning.)* Give students the following informal words and ask them to work in pairs to write the full form. They can also write a sentence using the word.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. sax | 6. Aussie |
| 2. admin | 7. legit |
| 3. aggro | 8. mag |
| 4. abs | 9. intro |
| 5. ammo | 10. info |

[Answers: 1. saxophone; 2. administration/administrator; 3. aggravation; 4. abdominal or stomach muscles; 5. ammunition; 6. Australian; 7. legitimate or legal; 8. magazine; 9. introduction; 10. information]

Writing: Ask students to write a 200 word biography of one of the Beatles. Remind them that they will use the past tense and/or past perfect tense for George and John, but they could use the present perfect tense when writing about Paul or Ringo. You could help them think about how to plan this by asking them to suggest some questions they would like answers to.

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