

Who can stop Trump?

Level 2 • Intermediate

1 Warmer

What do you know about the US political system? Think about and discuss as many facts as you can.

2 Key words

Match the key words with the definitions below. Then, find them in the article to read them in context. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

controversy

grassroots

nomination

outbursts

outraged

roughed up

veteran

1. the ordinary people in a community, country, society or organization; not its leaders
_____ (para 1)
2. the decision to give someone the official position of being a political party's candidate for president
_____ (para 1)
3. disagreement, especially about a political policy or a moral issue that a lot of people have strong feelings about
_____ (para 2)
4. sudden spoken expressions of a strong feeling, especially anger _____
(para 2)
5. made people extremely angry and shocked _____ (para 3)
6. someone who was in the armed forces, especially during a war _____ (para 3)
7. physically attacked _____ (para 4)

candidates

converting

deporting

mouthpiece

packed

retract

scum

8. an insulting word for someone who you think is very unpleasant _____ (para 5)
9. say that something that you previously said or wrote is not true _____ (para 5)
10. sending someone out of a country, usually because they do not have a legal right to be there
_____ (para 9)
11. making people change from supporting one person to another _____ (para 11)
12. the people competing in an election _____ (para 12)
13. a person who expresses the opinions and beliefs of a certain group of people
_____ (para 14)
14. extremely crowded with a lot of people _____ (para 15)

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After the gaffes and flip-flops, Republicans ask: who can stop Trump?

Dan Roberts and Ben Jacobs in Washington
29 November, 2015

- 1 “Unless we win, it doesn’t mean a damn thing,” said billionaire Donald Trump, the man who wants to be the Republican presidential nominee, at a campaign rally in South Carolina. He said this despite finishing his fourth month in a row at the top of the opinion polls. “I want to pick my date for the election. I want it next Tuesday,” he confided to the crowd of 11,000 people. He has a lot of grassroots support, which he needs to continue until March 2016 for him to win the nomination to be the presidential candidate in November’s general election.
- 2 Trump is not the only one beginning to think it possible that his surprising campaign can go the distance, particularly because recent controversy only seems to have confirmed his lead over his rivals. Usually, any one of these outbursts would have destroyed a politician by now.
- 3 First, he outraged prisoners of war by doubting the heroism of Vietnam veteran John McCain because he allowed himself to be captured. Then, there was the first television debate, where he insulted Fox News moderator, Megyn Kelly, because she asked him difficult questions.
- 4 It seems that making prisoners of war, Fox News and women angry was not enough. Trump has also insulted Mexican immigrants to the US, claimed that a Black Lives Matter protester who was violently thrown out of a rally deserved to be “roughed up”, appeared to laugh at a *New York Times* journalist for his disability and falsely accused Muslim Americans of supporting the 9/11 attackers.
- 5 Trump has complained that many of these incidents were exaggerated by the political media, 70% of whom, he says, are “scum”. But, he has refused to retract any of the comments.
- 6 Some rivals still hope that, eventually, even Trump’s supporters will get tired of his attacks on minorities. One poll shows his support among Republicans has reduced by 12 points – although, at 31%, he is still in the lead.
- 7 “He is an egomaniac; he’s a narcissist. He’s not a conservative, he’s not a liberal – he believes in himself,” former presidential rival, Bobby Jindal, told the *Guardian*, before he left the race.
- 8 But, there is more to Trump than attention-grabbing outrage. As he is happy to tell supporters, the three things that he is most against – immigration reform, free-trade deals and Barack Obama’s national security policy – have become perhaps the most important issues of the election.
- 9 His policies for deporting every undocumented immigrant in the US and demanding that Mexico pays for a border wall – “A real wall. A very tall wall, taller than that ceiling.” – might sound unrealistic but they have destroyed the campaign hopes of Jeb Bush, who favours immigration reform.
- 10 So what can stop Trump? One reason for hope among opponents is the strong evidence that polls this far away from election day can be incorrect, simply because most people have not made up their minds how to vote yet. Among Americans who say they are Republicans, current polls suggest he has 25-30% of the vote.
- 11 In the political battle for hearts and minds, converting Trump’s passionate supporters will be hard. It is hard to imagine anyone being a better ‘Trump’ than Trump.
- 12 This scenario can be best understood by looking at responses to the question: “Which candidates would you definitely not support for the Republican nomination for president?” While 20-30% of voters say they would support Trump, another 20-30% say they definitely would not.
- 13 Steve Deace, an Iowa conservative, said that Trump’s behaviour is “both a good and a bad thing. On the one hand, it produces loyal fans that are attracted to his personality. On the other hand, it limits his ability to grow beyond that.”
- 14 Top Republican pollster, Frank Luntz, believes Trump speaks for voters who, for the first time, feel as if they have a mouthpiece and like the fact that they feel like they are heard. He says, “Trump says what they’re thinking and, the more outrageous he is, the more they agree with him. He’s saying what no politician would say and that’s another reason they like him.”
- 15 That is certainly the feeling among ordinary supporters who have attended his increasingly packed campaign events recently.

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16 "I like the way he speaks," says Sandra Murray of Dubuque, Iowa. "This country is a big mess and, honestly, he could be the man to help us."

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17 Other supporters offer a simpler explanation. "He's not afraid of anybody or anything. That's pretty cool."

3 Comprehension check

Answer the questions in as much detail as you can. Refer back to the article if necessary.

1. What job does Donald Trump want to have?
2. Which political party is he a member of?
3. Who has he publically laughed at and insulted?
4. What three current political issues is he against?
5. Why is Trump so popular with certain voters?

4 Descriptive words and expressions

What words and expressions are used in the article to describe Trump? Write them below.

What impression does this give you of the man?

What do you think the writers of the article think about Trump?

Donald Trump is described as:

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5 Political collocations

Match the words to make political collocations from the article. Then, use the collocations to talk about the article.

e.g. presidential + nominee

Donald Trump wants to be the Republican Party's presidential nominee in 2016.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. campaign | a. polls |
| 2. opinion | b. rally |
| 3. grassroots | c. fans |
| 4. general | d. events |
| 5. loyal | e. support |
| 6. campaign | f. election |

6 Expressions

a. Complete the expressions from the article. Find each one in the article to see how it was used and, in your own words, explain what each expression means.

- go the d _ _ _ _ _
- make up their m _ _ _ _
- on the o _ _ hand, ...; on the o _ _ _ _ hand, ...

b. Write a sentence of your own for each expression.

7 Webquest

Find out more about the presidential and political system in the US.

- What does an American president do nationally and internationally?
- How is a president elected?
- What is the election period (in years) for a president?
- How long is a president allowed to stay president?
- Where do US presidents live and work?

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KEY

2 Key words

1. grassroots
2. nomination
3. controversy
4. outbursts
5. outraged
6. veteran
7. roughed up
8. scum
9. retract
10. deporting
11. converting
12. candidates
13. mouthpiece
14. packed

3 Comprehension check

1. president of the United States of America
2. the Republicans
3. prisoners of war, Fox News, women, Mexican immigrants, a Black Lives Matter protester, a disabled man, Muslim Americans
4. immigration reform, free-trade deals, Obama's national security policy
5. They feel like he says the things that they are thinking and that he dares to say things that no other politician would dare to say. They think that he's the man to save the US and they think he's cool because he's not afraid of anybody or anything.

4 Descriptive words and expressions

the man who wants to be the Republican
presidential nominee
billionaire
egomaniac
narcissist
not a conservative; not a liberal
outrageous
mouthpiece

5 Political collocations

1. b
2. a
3. e
4. f
5. c
6. d

6 Expressions

1. distance – compete in a race or game until the end, continuing to try to win
2. minds – make a decision
3. one; other – used for giving two different opinions about something