

# BIG WINS AND LOSSES

Jan 17th, 2023

**WARM-UP QUESTIONS:** *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s).*

1. In your culture, are there actions or objects that bring good luck? How about bad luck?
2. Read the headline above. Have you heard this news story? If so, say what you know. If not, can you guess what it is about?

**VOCABULARY:** *Match the following vocabulary words with a description. Use a dictionary if you need to.*

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|------------------|---|
| 1. Win big       | a) a game of chance that rewards winners and often raises money for charity or government |
| 2. Lottery       | b) a large cash prize, a prize that grows until it is won                                 |
| 3. Tier          | c) one after another  |
| 4. Draw          | d) an all-at-once payment   |
| 5. Consecutively | e) to win a lot   |
| 6. Jackpot       | f) yearly   |
| 7. Annual        | g) to select the names or numbers in a lottery  |
| 8. Lump sum      | h) a level  |

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**LISTEN:** *Listen to the audio track on [eslnewsstories.com](http://eslnewsstories.com) or to a reader of the text. Try to fill in the missing words. Then check your answers with the full text (below).*

One lucky person has won big in the American \_\_\_\_\_ of Maine. The winner's identity is not yet known, but we do know they bought a Mega Millions lottery ticket at Hometown Gas & Grill in the town of Lebanon, on \_\_\_\_\_ the 13th.

The Mega Millions lottery had been drawn twenty-five times consecutively without producing a top-tier winner. As a result, the jackpot \_\_\_\_\_ had grown to \$1.35 billion. It is the third largest amount ever won by a single person in a lottery jackpot. The highest amount ever won was in the Powerball lottery in \_\_\_\_\_ of last year. That person won \$2.04 billion.

The winner is now faced with a choice. They can receive the full amount in annual payments for 29 years, or they can get a reduced \_\_\_\_\_, of about \$725 million, in a lump sum. They will also have to pay the biggest tax bill they have ever seen.

Meanwhile, over the last year, Elon Musk lost more money than any person in \_\_\_\_\_. Due mainly to the drop in value of Tesla stock, he lost about \$182 billion and became only the second richest person in the world (behind Bernard Arnault, CEO of the group that owns Louis Vuitton). Musk will be okay though - he is still \_\_\_\_\_ around \$147 billion.

**WORD FORMS:** *Fill in different forms for the vocabulary from the article. Use a dictionary if you need to. Where there is an x, the word is unimportant for ESL students, has a different meaning, or does not exist. Sometimes there are multiple possible answers, and sometimes the adjective form is a past or present participle.*

VERB	ADJECTIVE	ADVERB	NOUN
		x	tier
draw		x	
x		consecutively	
	annual		

**FULL STORY:**

One lucky person has won big in the American state of Maine. The winner’s identity is not yet known, but we do know they bought a Mega Millions lottery ticket at Hometown Gas & Grill in the town of Lebanon, on Friday the 13th.

The Mega Millions lottery had been drawn twenty-five times consecutively without producing a top-tier winner. As a result, the jackpot prize had grown to \$1.35 billion. It is the third largest amount ever won by a single person in a lottery jackpot. The highest amount ever won was in the Powerball lottery in November of last year. That person won \$2.04 billion.

The winner is now faced with a choice. They can receive the full amount in annual payments for 29 years, or they can get a reduced amount, of about \$725 million, in a lump sum. They will also have to pay the biggest tax bill they have ever seen.

Meanwhile, over the last year, Elon Musk lost more money than any person in history. Due mainly to the drop in value of Tesla stock, he lost about \$182 billion and became only the second richest person in the world (behind Bernard Arnault, CEO of the group that owns Louis Vuitton). Musk will be okay though - he is still worth around \$147 billion.

Sources: apnews.com, reuters.com, theguardian.com  
For source links, see the article on ESLNewsStories.com

**COMPREHENSION:** *Decide if the following are true (T) or false (F), and then discuss your answers with your partner(s).*

1. The winning ticket was bought in Wisconsin. ( T / F )
2. The winner has a decision to make. ( T / F )
3. Elon Musk is no longer the richest person in the world. ( T / F )
4. Powerball winners usually win more than Mega Millions winners. ( T / F )

**COMPLETE:** *Re-order the following sentences. Capitalize certain words and add punctuation.*

1. winner / yet / may / the / know / not / they / won
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2. receive / they / lump sum / can / a / payment
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**DISCUSSION:** *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s). Try to speak in sentences and ask follow-up questions.*

1. What did you think about this story? Was there any surprising information?
2. Do you believe in luck? Are you a lucky or unlucky person overall?
3. Is there a lottery in your country? If so, does it make money for a charity or the government?
4. Have you ever won something in a lottery or game of chance? What did you win? How did you feel?
5. Is a lottery the same as gambling?
6. If you were the winner of the Mega Millions jackpot, would you take the yearly payments or the lump sum? Why?
7. How would you feel to receive a huge tax bill?
8. Do you feel sorry for Elon Musk? Why or why not?
9. How do you feel about luxury brands like Louis Vuitton? Do you want to have their products?
10. Do you have any stock? How is it doing these days?
11. If you won the lottery, who would you tell?

12. If you were the jackpot winner, what would you do with the money?

**WRITING:** Write a paragraph that clearly states your opinion on the above news article. Give reasons for your opinion.

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**ANSWERS**

VOCABULARY: 1-e, 2-a, 3-h, 4-g, 5-c, 6-b, 7-f, 8-d

WORD FORMS: tier, tiered, drawn, draw, consecutive, consecutiveness, annualize, annually, annual

COMPREHENSION: 1-F, 2-T, 3-T, 4-F

COMPLETE: 1. The winner may not know they won yet. 2. They can receive a lump sum payment.