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Pentagon reports on Koran abuse

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5 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Pentagon reports on Koran abuse

BNE: The Pentagon has ended its investigation into the Koran abuse scandal. Guantanamo Bay spokesman General Jay Hood described five occasions when the Koran was mistreated. On one occasion the Koran was kicked and on another it was accidentally splashed with urine. The report said a guard had gone to the toilet against a prison wall, near an air vent. General Hood reported that "the wind blew his urine through the vent" and onto a prisoner and his Koran.

Newsweek magazine reported in May that a Koran was flushed in a toilet by prison guards. The article created fury and anger around the Muslim world. A total of 16 people died in protests. Muslims burned U.S. flags and shouted in the streets for revenge. As recently as June 1, the Pakistan Senate called for an international inquiry into the incident. *Newsweek* later said their story was probably untrue and apologized.

General Hood said the Koran cases happened in 2003. He explained that prisoners and their Korans are moved thousands of times every week, so accidents can and do happen. He stated: "Mishandling a Koran at Guantanamo Bay is a rare occurrence." Camp guidelines about touching the Koran are very strict. Only Muslim clergymen, interpreters or the prisoners can touch the holy book. Guards can no longer touch it.

WARM-UPS

1. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*The Pentagon / the Koran / Guantanamo Bay / toilets / Newsweek magazine /
burning U.S. flags / revenge / accidents*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

2. THE PENTAGON: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the Pentagon. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them.

3. STORY PREDICTION: In pairs / groups, use the words from the "CHAT" activity to predict how the story in the article will unfold. Change partners and compare your stories. If you have different ideas, talk about which story you think will be closer to the article.

4. BACKGROUND SEARCH: Look at the headline. In pairs / groups, tell each other everything you know about the background to this story - the facts and timeline. Visit other pairs / groups to find out more information. When you have finished, write down three issues from your information. Give your opinions on the rights and wrongs of these issues. Find new partners and talk about rights and wrongs again.

5. PENTAGON REPORT OPINIONS: In pairs / groups, talk about the following opinions on the Koran abuse report. Which do you agree or disagree with? Do you agree/disagree slightly or strongly?

- a. The report is from the U.S. military therefore it must be true.
- b. I think it's all lies – a cover-up.
- c. The army has done a good job at finding the truth. The Muslim world can now be happy.
- d. The editors and publishers from *Newsweek* magazine should go to prison. Their lies caused sixteen deaths.
- e. I think this report will only make Muslims angrier.
- f. It's time to free the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. They have no information.
- g. There will be another abuse against Muslims and their culture and religion. There are too many soldiers who don't like Muslims.
- h. If U.S. soldiers were in a Taliban or Saddam Hussein prison camp, I don't think they'd get Bibles. Guantanamo Bay prisoners are lucky to have Korans.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. The U.S. military investigated abuses of the Koran by U.S. soldiers. | T / F |
| b. A report says five incidents of "mishandling" the Koran occurred. | T / F |
| c. A camp guard urinated over a Koran. | T / F |
| d. Reports that a Koran was flushed down the toilet are true. | T / F |
| e. Sixteen people died because of an incorrect <i>Newsweek</i> article. | T / F |
| f. Pakistan wants an international inquiry into the Koran abuse. | T / F |
| g. Korans are moved thousands of times every week at the camp. | T / F |
| h. Guantanamo Bay guards are allowed to touch the Koran. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| a. investigation | wronged |
| b. abuse | matter |
| c. mistreated | happening |
| d. vent | examination |
| e. fury | getting even |
| f. revenge | outlet |
| g. incident | unusual |
| h. rare | wrongdoing |
| i. occurrence | clerics |
| j. clergymen | outrage |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| a. ended its | vent |
| b. splashed | into the incident |
| c. air | in protests |
| d. The article created fury | untrue |
| e. 16 people died | and anger |
| f. As recently | clergymen |
| g. an international inquiry | investigation |
| h. their story was probably | book |
| i. Muslim | as June 1 |
| j. holy | with urine |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

Pentagon reports on Koran abuse

BNE: The Pentagon has ended its _____ into the Koran abuse scandal. Guantanamo Bay spokesman General Jay Hood described five _____ when the Koran was _____. On one occasion the Koran was kicked and on another it was accidentally _____ with urine. The report said a guard had gone to the toilet against a prison wall, near an air _____. General Hood reported that "the wind blew his urine through the vent" and onto a _____ and his Koran.

splashed
occasions
vent
investigation
prisoner
mistreated

Newsweek magazine _____ in May that a Koran was flushed in a toilet by prison guards. The article created _____ and anger around the Muslim world. A total of 16 people died in _____. Muslims burned U.S. flags and shouted in the streets for _____. As recently as June 1, the Pakistan Senate called for an international _____ into the incident. *Newsweek* later said their story was probably untrue and _____.

apologized
fury
inquiry
protests
reported
revenge

General Hood said the Koran _____ happened in 2003. He explained that prisoners and their Korans are _____ thousands of times every week, so accidents can and do _____. He stated: "Mishandling a Koran at Guantanamo Bay is a rare _____." Camp _____ about touching the Koran are very strict. Only Muslim _____, interpreters or the prisoners can touch the holy book. Guards can no longer touch it.

moved
clergymen
cases
guidelines
occurrence
happen

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**holy**' and '**book**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT GUANTANAMO BAY SURVEY: In pairs / groups write down questions about Guantanamo Bay and the Koran abuse scandal.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make a mini-presentation to another group / the class on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| • investigation | • flags |
| • five | • apologized |
| • splashed | • cases |
| • vent | • accidents |
| • <i>Newsweek</i> | • guidelines |
| • Muslim world | • clergymen |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you read the headline?
- b. Have you been following this news?
- c. Are you surprised by the report's findings?
- d. Do you think the report has a fair conclusion?
- e. Should the guard who kicked the Koran be punished?
- f. Should *Newsweek* be punished?
- g. Do you think the U.S. Army is anti-Muslim?
- h. Do you think U.S. soldiers would be allowed a Bible if they were in Taliban prisons?
- i. Do you think Guantanamo prisoners are fairly treated?
- j. Do you think human rights are always given in Guantanamo?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading the article?
- b. How did this news make you feel?
- c. Do you always read news about Guantanamo Bay?
- d. Do you really believe that "the wind blew his urine through the vent"? Doesn't that sound a bit fishy?
- e. Why are there still prisoners in Guantanamo Bay?
- f. Why is it taking more than three years to get information from prisoners?
- g. What would you think if someone burned your country's flag?
- h. Should there be an international inquiry into the Koran abuse?
- i. Do you think there'll be more abuse stories?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

NEWS REPORT: You must prepare a report for tomorrow's morning news. Your story is the Guantanamo Bay Koran abuse. The outline for your report is in the table. Think of three things to say about each of the words below to build into your report.

WORDS	THINGS TO SAY ABOUT THEM IN THE NEWS REPORT
The Pentagon report	1. 2. 3.
Guantanamo Bay	1. 2. 3.
Koran	1. 2. 3.
<i>Newsweek</i>	1. 2. 3.
Camp guidelines	1. 2. 3.
Conclusion	1. 2. 3.

After you have finished, change partners / groups. Report your news items to your new partner(s) to practice for tomorrow's news programme. You may use the words in the column on the left as prompts. Do not look at the other column.

Give each other advice / feedback to make your reports better.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Pentagon reports on Koran abuse

BNE: The Pentagon has _____ into the Koran abuse scandal. Guantanamo Bay spokesman General Jay Hood described five occasions when the Koran _____. On one occasion the Koran was kicked and on another it was _____ with urine. The report said a guard had gone to the toilet against a prison wall, near an air vent. General Hood reported that "the wind blew his urine through the vent" and _____ and his Koran.

Newsweek magazine reported in May that a Koran was _____ by prison guards. The article created _____ around the Muslim world. A total of 16 people died in protests. Muslims burned U.S. flags and shouted in the streets _____. As recently as June 1, the Pakistan Senate called for an international inquiry _____. *Newsweek* later said their story was probably untrue and apologized.

General Hood said the _____ in 2003. He explained that prisoners and their Korans are moved _____ every week, so accidents can and do happen. He stated: "Mishandling a Koran at Guantanamo Bay is _____." Camp guidelines about touching the Koran are very strict. Only Muslim _____, interpreters or the prisoners can touch the holy book. _____ can no longer touch it.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the Koran abuse scandal. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. HOLY BOOK: Choose a holy book from any religion other than your own. Make a fact sheet about the history of the book and its main teachings. Compare the histories and teachings of the different holy books in your next class. Discuss the similarities and differences in the teachings.

4. LETTER: Write a letter to Brigadier General Jay Hood telling him what you think of the conclusion of the Koran abuse scandal. Show your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| a. investigation | examination |
| b. abuse | wrongdoing |
| c. mistreated | wronged |
| d. vent | outlet |
| e. fury | outrage |
| f. revenge | getting even |
| g. incident | matter |
| h. rare | unusual |
| i. occurrence | happening |
| j. clergymen | clerics |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| a. ended its | investigation |
| b. splashed | with urine |
| c. air | vent |
| d. The article created fury | and anger |
| e. 16 people died | in protests |
| f. As recently | as June 1 |
| g. an international inquiry | into the incident |
| h. their story was probably | untrue |
| i. Muslim | clergymen |
| j. holy | book |

GAP FILL:

Pentagon reports on Koran abuse

BNE: The Pentagon has ended its **investigation** into the Koran abuse scandal. Guantanamo Bay spokesman General Jay Hood described five **occasions** when the Koran was **mistreated**. On one occasion the Koran was kicked and on another it was accidentally **splashed** with urine. The report said a guard had gone to the toilet against a prison wall, near an air **vent**. General Hood reported that "the wind blew his urine through the vent" and onto a **prisoner** and his Koran.

Newsweek magazine **reported** in May that a Koran was flushed in a toilet by prison guards. The article created **fury** and anger around the Muslim world. A total of 16 people died in **protests**. Muslims burned U.S. flags and shouted in the streets for **revenge**. As recently as June 1, the Pakistan Senate called for an international **inquiry** into the incident. *Newsweek* later said their story was probably untrue and **apologized**.

General Hood said the Koran **cases** happened in 2003. He explained that prisoners and their Korans are **moved** thousands of times every week, so accidents can and do **happen**. He stated: "Mishandling a Koran at Guantanamo Bay is a rare **occurrence**." Camp **guidelines** about touching the Koran are very strict. Only Muslim **clergymen**, interpreters or the prisoners can touch the holy book. Guards can no longer touch it.