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Japanese student bombs classroom

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11 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Japanese student bombs classroom

BNE: Japan is in a state of shock today after a high school student made a bomb and threw it into a classroom at his school. The homemade device was a jar full of gunpowder and other chemicals. It exploded with a deafening bang. Fifty-eight students received cuts from pieces of flying glass and metal. Others suffered from shock and earaches. One boy is in serious condition in hospital after suffering injuries to his stomach. An 18-year-old student was arrested on suspicion of assault. Police cannot release his name because he is a minor under Japanese law.

This bombing incident is the latest of many attacks and murders by young Japanese people. Japan's famously law-abiding citizens are becoming more and more afraid of teenagers. There has been a big increase in the number of deadly and dangerous acts of violence committed by teenagers. Teachers said the boy who made the explosive device in yesterday's bombing was "normal". They also said he was never late for school or skipped class and has "above average" grades. The boy told a teacher that he made the bomb because he had a grudge against a fellow student.

WARM-UPS

1. TEENAGERS: In pairs / groups, talk about teenagers in your country. Are they dangerous? Are they good kids? Are teenagers the same all over the world? Is being a teenager easy or difficult? Which of these things would you like to change about teenagers?

- Hairstyles
- Sleeping patterns
- Usefulness
- Manners
- Habits
- Musical tastes
- Friends
- Homework and housework
- Fashion sense
- Other

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

Japan / shock / high school / gunpowder / cuts / hospital / assault / bombing incidents / law-abiding citizens / violence / grudges / teenagers

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

3. TEENAGERS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with teenagers. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. TEENAGER OPINIONS: Talk with your partner(s) about these opinions. Do you agree or disagree with them?

- a. Being a teenager is a really bad time.
- b. Adults don't like teenagers.
- c. Adults should give teenagers more respect.
- d. Older people can learn a lot from teenagers.
- e. Teenagers are not kids. They are adults.
- f. Sixteen-year-olds who commit crimes should get the same punishments as adults.
- g. Teenagers don't have enough respect for adults.
- h. Teenagers are dangerous.
- i. I'd love to be a teenager again / I'd love to stay a teenager.
- j. Teenagers belong to a completely different culture.

5. TEENAGE STAGES: Write the numbers 13 – 19 on a piece of paper. In pairs / groups, talk about the different things that happen to teenagers during each teenage year. What do they like? What do they think about? Change partners and compare the things you talked about with your first partner(s).

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. A student in Japan exploded a bomb in a school classroom. | T / F |
| b. The student bought the bomb from an Internet store. | T / F |
| c. Students received cuts from flying glass. | T / F |
| d. The police arrested a boy on charges of terrorism. | T / F |
| e. This is the first time a Japanese teenager has been so violent. | T / F |
| f. Japan's citizens are becoming more and more afraid of teenagers. | T / F |
| g. Teachers said the boy was a rebel and a troublemaker. | T / F |
| h. The boy said he had a grudge against another student. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| a. shock | mechanism |
| b. device | happening |
| c. exploded | abdomen |
| d. stomach | peaceful |
| e. minor | done |
| f. incident | confusion |
| g. law-abiding | grievance |
| h. committed | junior |
| i. skipped | went off |
| j. grudge | missed |

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

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| a. in a state of | glass and metal |
| b. homemade | many attacks and murders |
| c. exploded with a | device |
| d. pieces of flying | against a fellow student |
| e. arrested on | in the number of |
| f. the latest of | shock |
| g. law-abiding | suspicion of assault |
| h. a big increase | deafening bang |
| i. above average | citizens |
| j. he had a grudge | grades |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Japanese student bombs classroom

BNE: Japan is in a _____ of shock today after a high school student made a bomb and _____ it into a classroom at his school. The homemade _____ was a jar full of gunpowder and other chemicals. It exploded with a deafening _____. Fifty-eight students received cuts from pieces of _____ glass and metal. Others suffered from shock and earaches. One boy is in _____ condition in hospital after suffering injuries to his stomach. An 18-year-old student was arrested on _____ of assault. Police cannot release his name because he is a _____ under Japanese law.

bang
minor
threw
suspicion
state
serious
device
flying

This bombing incident is the _____ of many attacks and murders by young Japanese people. Japan's _____ law-abiding citizens are becoming more and more afraid of teenagers. There has been a big _____ in the number of deadly and dangerous acts of _____ committed by teenagers. Teachers said the boy who made the explosive _____ in yesterday's bombing was "normal". They also said he was never late for school or _____ class and has "above _____" grades. The boy told a teacher that he made the bomb because he had a _____ against a fellow student.

device
famously
latest
violence
grudge
average
skipped
increase

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 TEENAGER SURVEY: In pairs / groups write down questions about teenagers and teenage problems.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups 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:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| • state | • latest |
| • full | • law-abiding |
| • deafening | • acts |
| • serious | • normal |
| • suspicion | • skipped |
| • minor | • grudge |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What did you think when you read this headline?
- b. What adjective(s) describe your feelings about this story?
- c. What is your image of Japanese teenagers?
- d. Are you surprised that a Japanese high school student threw a bomb into his classroom?
- e. What crazy things did students do when you were at high school?
- f. Describe the worst behaved student in your school or class?
- g. Are the schools in your country safe?
- h. Is society to blame when something like this happens?
- i. What's the worst thing you did when you were at school?
- j. Do you worry about the future of your country when you hear stories like this?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. Are you interested in news from Japan?
- c. Would this kind of thing happen in your country?
- d. Are teenagers dangerous in your country?
- e. What punishment should this young man receive?
- f. Is an 18-year-old high school student a boy or a man?
- g. Have you become more suspicious of young people?
- h. Have you ever had a grudge against anyone?
- i. Were (Are) you a model student at school?
- 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

TEENAGE ANGST: Imagine you are counselors with the organization T.A.R.P (Teenagers Are Real People).

In pairs / groups, make brief notes about the advice and guidelines you would give to teenagers with the problems listed in the table below.

You need to provide the reason for the problem and an explanation so the teenager understands it better.

PROBLEM	REASON / EXPLANATION	ADVICE
I can't find a boy/girlfriend.		
My parents order me to study non-stop.		
My teacher has asked me on a date.		
I don't know how to tell my parents I'm gay.		
My body is much less developed than other kids in my class.		
I don't want to go outside because I have so much acne.		
My friends keep asking me to smoke marijuana.		
I hate myself.		

Role play a student with a problem and a counselor. (The student must always find a reason not to accept the counselor's advice.)

Talk about the problems you had when you were a teenager. Did you experience any of the above problems?

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Japanese student bombs classroom

BNE: Japan is in _____ today after a high school student made a bomb and _____ a classroom at his school. The homemade device was _____ gunpowder and other chemicals. It exploded with a deafening bang. Fifty-eight students received cuts from _____ and metal. Others suffered from shock and earaches. One boy is _____ in hospital after suffering injuries to his stomach. An 18-year-old student was arrested on suspicion of assault. Police cannot release his name because _____ under Japanese law.

This bombing incident is _____ attacks and murders by young Japanese people. Japan's _____ law-abiding citizens are becoming _____ of teenagers. There has been a big increase in the number of deadly and dangerous _____ committed by teenagers. Teachers said the boy who made the explosive device in yesterday's bombing was "normal". They also said he was never late for school or _____ and has " _____ " grades. The boy told a teacher that he made the bomb because _____ against a fellow student.

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 Japanese youth. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. TEENAGE HELP: Write a fact sheet for teenagers giving them some simple tips on how to survive their teenage years. Show your tips to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you have similar ideas?

4. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT: Imagine you are a psychology counselor for teenagers. Write a report on the Japanese high school student who bombed his classroom. Read your report to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| a. shock | confusion |
| b. device | mechanism |
| c. exploded | went off |
| d. stomach | abdomen |
| e. minor | junior |
| f. incident | happening |
| g. law-abiding | peaceful |
| h. committed | done |
| i. skipped | missed |
| j. grudge | grievance |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| a. in a state of | shock |
| b. homemade | device |
| c. exploded with a | deafening bang |
| d. pieces of flying | glass and metal |
| e. arrested on | suspicion of assault |
| f. the latest of | many attacks and murders |
| g. law-abiding | citizens |
| h. a big increase | in the number of |
| i. above average | grades |
| j. he had a grudge | against a fellow student |

GAP FILL:

Japanese student bombs classroom

BNE: Japan is in a **state** of shock today after a high school student made a bomb and **threw** it into a classroom at his school. The homemade **device** was a jar full of gunpowder and other chemicals. It exploded with a deafening **bang**. Fifty-eight students received cuts from pieces of **flying** glass and metal. Others suffered from shock and earaches. One boy is in **serious** condition in hospital after suffering injuries to his stomach. An 18-year-old student was arrested on **suspicion** of assault. Police cannot release his name because he is a **minor** under Japanese law.

This bombing incident is the **latest** of many attacks and murders by young Japanese people. Japan's **famously** law-abiding citizens are becoming more and more afraid of teenagers. There has been a big **increase** in the number of deadly and dangerous acts of **violence** committed by teenagers. Teachers said the boy who made the explosive **device** in yesterday's bombing was "normal". They also said he was never late for school or **skipped** class and has "above **average**" grades. The boy told a teacher that he made the bomb because he had a **grudge** against a fellow student.