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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”

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## **Human bird flu spreads to western Turkey**

URL: [http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0601/060109-bird\\_flu-e.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0601/060109-bird_flu-e.html)

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**9 January, 2006**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Human bird flu spreads to western Turkey**

Human bird flu is continuing to move west. Three new cases of the disease have been reported in a town an hour north of the Turkish capital Ankara. Fear and panic are now spreading among Turkey's citizens. Turks were already worried because of the deaths of three children in the east of the country a few days ago. At least two of the youngsters had been playing with the head of a bird that had the deadly H5N1 virus. Turkey's neighbors have reacted quickly. Iran has closed its borders with Turkey and Russia has advised its nationals against any unnecessary visits.

Health officials have told people not to panic. Authorities are currently killing thousands of chickens in the eastern city of Van, the source of the current outbreak. However, politicians have accused the government of being too slow to stop the spread of the virus. The media too have attacked Turkey's health departments for their poor response and lack of preparation. Newspaper editors are asking why Turkey does not have bird flu plans similar to those in Holland or Britain. There are fears that a virus that can pass among humans may soon form, which may start a global pandemic and could kill millions.

## WARM-UPS

**1. IT'S HERE:** Imagine avian bird flu has arrived in your country. How will it change your life? What do you want your government to do? Will you be glued to the TV? Walk around the class and talk to other students. Ask them for their latest news of the virus.

**2. PANDEMICS:** In pairs / groups, talk about the following pandemics. Which ones are you worried about? Which ones have affected your life (or might do so)?

- Avian bird flu
- Terrorism
- Materialism
- Coca-colarization
- Drug abuse
- Bad social behavior
- AIDS
- Pollution

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

*Bird flu / west / outbreaks / influenza / fear / panic / viruses / infected birds / visits chickens / politicians / preparation / response / plans / global pandemics*

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

**4. OPINIONS:** Do you agree with these opinions on avian bird flu? Talk about them with your partner(s).

- a. Governments will stop bird flu from becoming a big threat.
- b. Bird flu will never pass from human to human.
- c. Governments should start gathering drugs that fight the virus.
- d. Countries need to listen to the WHO, who says millions of people could die.
- e. Many governments still mistakenly believe bird flu is an "Asian problem".
- f. Bird flu will be big and develop into a deadly pandemic.
- g. Hunters should start killing all wild birds now.
- h. Eating chicken is too risky.

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

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think bird flu will become a global disaster and emergency measures should be taken now. Students B think scientists are trying to frighten people and the virus will cause few human deaths. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Human bird flu is heading west and may soon reach Turkey.               | T / F |
| b. Three Turkish children died from bird flu a few days ago.               | T / F |
| c. Two children ate the head of an infected chicken.                       | T / F |
| d. Iran and Russia have closed their borders with Turkey.                  | T / F |
| e. Turkish officials are killing thousands of chickens.                    | T / F |
| f. The opposition congratulated health officials on their speedy response. | T / F |
| g. Newspaper editors want the government to relocate to Holland.           | T / F |
| h. The virus is now in a form that can spread among humans.                | T / F |

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

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| a. move       | kids         |
| b. cases      | citizens     |
| c. youngsters | questioning  |
| d. reacted    | present      |
| e. nationals  | criticized   |
| f. killing    | responded    |
| g. current    | head         |
| h. attacked   | concerns     |
| i. asking     | slaughtering |
| j. fears      | incidents    |

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

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. Human bird flu is continuing      | deadly H5N1 virus              |
| b. Fear and panic                    | quickly                        |
| c. a bird that had the               | against any unnecessary visits |
| d. Turkey's neighbors have reacted   | not to panic                   |
| e. Russia has advised its nationals  | to those in Holland or Britain |
| f. Health officials have told people | the spread of the virus        |
| g. the source of                     | to move west                   |
| h. too slow to stop                  | among humans                   |
| i. bird flu plans similar            | are now spreading              |
| j. a virus that can pass             | the current outbreak           |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**WRONG WORD:** Delete the four incorrect or least likely words from the eight in bold in each paragraph. In pairs / groups, agree on better words.

### **Human bird flu spreads to western Turkey**

Human bird flu is continuing to move **west**. Three new **briefcases** of the disease have been **reported** in a town an hour north of the Turkish capital Ankara. Fear and panic are now **speeding** among Turkey's citizens. Turks were already worried because of the deaths of three children in the east of the **rural** a few days ago. At least two of the **youngsters** had been playing with the head of a bird that had the deadly H5N1 virus. Turkey's neighbors have reacted **quickly**. Iran has closed its borders with Turkey and Russia has advised its nationals against any **necessary** visits.

Health officials have told people not to panic. Authorities are **currently** killing thousands of chickens in the eastern city of Van, the **sauce** of the current outbreak. However, politicians have accused the government of being too **slow** to stop the spread of the virus. The **medium** too have attacked Turkey's health departments for their **rich** response and lack of preparation. Newspaper editors are asking why Turkey does not have bird flu **plans** similar to those in Holland or Britain. There are fears that a virus that can **pass** among humans may soon form, which may start a **village** pandemic and could kill millions.

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Human bird flu spreads to western Turkey**

Human bird flu is continuing to \_\_\_\_\_ west. Three new cases of the disease have been reported in a town an \_\_\_\_\_ north of the Turkish capital Ankara. Fear and panic are now spreading among Turkey's citizens. \_\_\_\_\_ were already worried because of the deaths of three children in the east of the country a few days ago. At \_\_\_\_\_ two of the youngsters had been playing with the head of a bird that had the deadly H5N1 virus. Turkey's neighbors have \_\_\_\_\_ quickly. Iran has closed its borders with Turkey and Russia has advised its nationals \_\_\_\_\_ any unnecessary visits.

Health officials have told people not to \_\_\_\_\_. Authorities are currently killing thousands of chickens in the eastern city of Van, the \_\_\_\_\_ of the current outbreak. However, politicians have accused the government of being too slow to stop the spread of the virus. The \_\_\_\_\_ too have attacked Turkey's health departments for their poor \_\_\_\_\_ and lack of preparation. Newspaper editors are asking why Turkey does not have bird flu plans \_\_\_\_\_ to those in Holland or Britain. There are fears that a virus that can pass among humans may soon form, which may start a global \_\_\_\_\_ and could kill millions.

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

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

- 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. WRONG WORD:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. 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 "BIRD FLU" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about bird flu and global pandemics.

- 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:

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| • move      | • panic    |
| • cases     | • current  |
| • few       | • slow     |
| • head      | • response |
| • neighbors | • plans    |
| • visits    | • pandemic |

## **DISCUSSION**

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

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Are you worried about bird flu?
- d. Do you think the world is worried about bird flu?
- e. What is your government doing to protect your country?
- f. What would you do if a human-to-human virus came to your country?
- g. What do you think is the best way to fight the virus?
- h. The WHO said the virus could kill millions. Have you seen, heard or read about this big news anywhere else?
- i. Do you think scientists are just scaring people?
- j. Do you think more money will be made available to fight bird flu if it reaches North America?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Should governments kill all wild birds to wipe out bird flu?
- d. What would happen to the world if millions started dying in Europe and North America?
- e. Do you think a pandemic will hit the world in the next ten years?
- f. What do you think of the WHO's claim that millions could die?
- g. Do you think governments are working together to fight bird flu?
- h. Will you now think twice about eating chicken?
- i. Do you think you'll become suspicious of flocks of birds?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

**ROLE PLAY:** This role play is to discuss whether or not more international action should be taken immediately to stop the spread of bird flu. Team up with classmates who have the same role as you. Develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins.

Introduce yourself to the other role players.

### Role A – Head of WHO

You are positive avian bird flu is the greatest threat to mankind for centuries. You are amazed so few countries seem concerned. You have data that suggest the virus is very close to spreading to humans. Worldwide action must be taken now.

THINK OF ACTIONS THAT MUST BE TAKEN TO FIGHT BIRD FLU.

### Role B – Chicken farmer

Your job is at risk from bird flu. You understand the danger but do not want to kill any of your chickens until people start dying. You don't think more humans will die. You think the WHO is over-reacting. You believe keeping chickens indoors will prevent the spread of the virus.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY BIRD FLU WILL NOT BE A PROBLEM.

### Role C – Citizen

You are shocked that your government is not acting to protect your country from bird flu. You know over 70 people died in Asia from the virus. You think the virus will mutate and spread to humans soon. You believe international governments are not well prepared enough.

THINK OF MEASURES YOUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE TAKING.

### Role D – Government official

Naturally, you know about bird flu. You have all of the scientific reports available. You are 100% sure the virus will not affect humans. It killed people in Asia because people lived so close to chickens. You are shocked at the WHO's irresponsibility in scaring people. You have enough vaccine.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY BIRD FLU IS NOT A BIG RISK.

Change roles and repeat the role play. Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

In pairs / groups, discuss whether you really believe in what you said while you were in your roles.

## **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 avian bird flu and the H5N1 virus. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. LETTER:** Write a letter to your government. Tell it how worried you are about a possible global bird flu pandemic. Tell the government what it should be doing right now. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

**4. CHICKEN:** You are a chicken. You have heard the stories about bird flu. You're not sure which worries you more – bird flu or being slaughtered by your farmer. Write your diary / journal entry for a day in your life and your thoughts on the virus reaching your farm. Read your entries to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all have similar concerns?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| a. move       | head         |
| b. cases      | incidents    |
| c. youngsters | kids         |
| d. reacted    | responded    |
| e. nationals  | citizens     |
| f. killing    | slaughtering |
| g. current    | present      |
| h. attacked   | criticized   |
| i. asking     | questioning  |
| j. fears      | concerns     |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. Human bird flu is continuing      | to move west                   |
| b. Fear and panic                    | are now spreading              |
| c. a bird that had the               | deadly H5N1 virus              |
| d. Turkey's neighbors have reacted   | quickly                        |
| e. Russia has advised its nationals  | against any unnecessary visits |
| f. Health officials have told people | not to panic                   |
| g. the source of                     | the current outbreak           |
| h. too slow to stop                  | the spread of the virus        |
| i. bird flu plans similar            | to those in Holland or Britain |
| j. a virus that can pass             | among humans                   |

### WRONG WORD:

#### Human bird flu spreads to western Turkey

Human bird flu is continuing to move west. Three new **briefcases** of the disease have been reported in a town an hour north of the Turkish capital Ankara. Fear and panic are now **spreading** among Turkey's citizens. Turks were already worried because of the deaths of three children in the east of the **country** a few days ago. At least two of the youngsters had been playing with the head of a bird that had the deadly H5N1 virus. Turkey's neighbors have reacted quickly. Iran has closed its borders with Turkey and Russia has advised its nationals against any **unnecessary** visits.

Health officials have told people not to panic. Authorities are currently killing thousands of chickens in the eastern city of Van, the **source** of the current outbreak. However, politicians have accused the government of being too slow to stop the spread of the virus. The **media** too have attacked Turkey's health departments for their **poor** response and lack of preparation. Newspaper editors are asking why Turkey does not have bird flu plans similar to those in Holland or Britain. There are fears that a virus that can pass among humans may soon form, which may start a **global** pandemic and could kill millions.