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Thousands escaping from Lebanon

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18 July, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Thousands escaping from Lebanon

The crisis in the Middle East means thousands of people are leaving Lebanon to go to safer countries. Citizens of western and Arab countries are trying to fly or sail to nearby Cyprus. However, Lebanon's only international airport has been bombed by Israel, which makes it almost impossible for anyone to leave. Israeli warships are also making it difficult for ships to come in and out of Lebanon's ports. Many of those trying to escape have been unlucky. They have had to make the overland trip by bus to neighboring Syria. Britain has sent two warships to rescue its citizens if necessary. U.S. helicopters have already moved 21 diplomatic staff from the embassy in a Beirut suburb.

The attacks by Israel and Lebanon-based Hezbollah guerillas are becoming more dangerous every day. The situation is so serious that it has taken over the agenda of G8 leaders meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia. U.S. President George W. Bush and the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair both blamed Iran and Syria for the violence. Mr. Bush said Israel had every right to defend itself from Hezbollah missile attacks. France, Italy and Russia have called for a ceasefire. The European Union has said Israel's use of force is too heavy, especially as 114 Lebanese civilians have been killed so far. Eight Israelis died on Sunday when Hezbollah rockets hit the northern city of Haifa.

WARM-UPS

1. ESCAPING: Imagine you are escaping from your country and are now an evacuee. Walk around the class and talk to as many other 'evacuees' as you can. Find out about their different situations and what they think of the future. Share your findings with new partners.

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

Crises / Middle East / airports / Israel / warships / helicopters / embassies / suburbs / guerillas / G8 / violence / missiles / ceasefires / use of force / civilians

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

3. PLAYERS: What do you know about the players in the current Middle East crisis? Ask your class members to find out about the players below. Share your findings with new partners

Israel

Hamas

Lebanon

Iran

Hezbollah

USA

Syria

Other _____

4. EVACUATION: Write down (or brainstorm) three items you would take with you if you were evacuated. Talk about them with your partner(s). Did you all choose the same things?

5. OPINIONS: With your partner(s), talk about the following opinions on the current Middle East crisis. Change partners and share your findings.

- a. The current crisis is nothing. It will soon blow end.
- b. Israel has every right to defend itself and use maximum force.
- c. There will never be peace in the region.
- d. Israel should give the West Bank to Palestine. Only then will there be peace.
- e. The UN should do more to bring about peace in the region.
- f. The region may see the use of nuclear weapons.
- g. Peace can only appear once George W. Bush is no longer the US President.
- h. It is unfair for Lebanon to have to suffer in the current crisis.

6. CRISIS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you link with the word crisis. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Thousands of people are leaving Lebanon for America. | T / F |
| b. Lebanon's international airports are busy with airplanes taking off. | T / F |
| c. Britain has sent warships to evacuate its citizens if necessary. | T / F |
| d. All staff at the US Embassy in Beirut have left. | T / F |
| e. Attacks by Israel and Hezbollah are making the crisis worse. | T / F |
| f. G8 leaders are meeting in Israel to discuss the situation. | T / F |
| g. George W. Bush and Tony Blair blamed Iran and Syria for the crisis. | T / F |
| h. The European Union has said Israel's use of force is OK. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| a. crisis | missiles |
| b. escape | fighters |
| c. rescue | program |
| d. trip | free |
| e. suburb | protect |
| f. guerillas | emergency |
| g. agenda | neighborhood |
| h. defend | break in fighting |
| i. ceasefire | get away |
| j. rockets | journey |

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

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| a. people are leaving Lebanon | out of Lebanon's ports |
| b. Lebanon's only international airport | a Beirut suburb |
| c. difficult for ships to come in and | use of force is too heavy |
| d. make the overland trip by | guerillas |
| e. the embassy in | bus to neighboring Syria |
| f. Lebanon-based Hezbollah | hit the northern city of Haifa |
| g. ...blamed Iran and Syria | to go to safer countries |
| h. Bush said Israel had every right | for the violence |
| i. The European Union has said Israel's | has been bombed by Israel |
| j. Hezbollah rockets | to defend itself |

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WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Thousands escaping from Lebanon

The crisis in the Middle East _____ thousands of people are leaving Lebanon to go to safer countries. Citizens of western and Arab countries are trying to fly or _____ to nearby Cyprus. However, Lebanon's only international airport has been _____ by Israel, which makes it _____ impossible for anyone to leave. Israeli warships are also making it difficult for ships to come in and out of Lebanon's ports. Many of those trying to _____ have been unlucky. They have had to make the overland _____ by bus to neighboring Syria. Britain has sent two warships to rescue its citizens if _____. U.S. helicopters have already moved 21 diplomatic staff from the _____ in a Beirut suburb.

escape
sail
embassy
almost
necessary
means
trip
bombed

The attacks by Israel and Lebanon-_____ Hezbollah guerillas are becoming more dangerous every day. The situation is so _____ that it has taken over the agenda of G8 leaders _____ in St. Petersburg, Russia. U.S. President George W. Bush and the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair _____ blamed Iran and Syria for the violence. Mr. Bush said Israel had every right to _____ itself from Hezbollah missile attacks. France, Italy and Russia have _____ for a ceasefire. The European Union has said Israel's use of _____ is too heavy, especially as 114 Lebanese civilians have been killed so far. Eight Israelis died on Sunday when Hezbollah _____ hit the northern city of Haifa.

both
force
serious
called
based
rockets
meeting
defend

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LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Thousands escaping from Lebanon

The _____ in the Middle East means thousands of people are leaving Lebanon to go to _____ countries. Citizens of western and Arab countries are trying to fly or sail to _____ Cyprus. However, Lebanon's only international airport has been bombed by Israel, which makes it almost impossible for anyone to leave. Israeli warships are also making it difficult for ships to come _____ of Lebanon's ports. Many of those trying to escape have been unlucky. They have had to make the _____ trip by bus to neighboring Syria. Britain has sent two warships to _____ its citizens if necessary. U.S. helicopters have already moved 21 diplomatic staff from the _____ in a Beirut suburb.

The attacks by Israel and Lebanon-based Hezbollah _____ are becoming more dangerous every day. The situation is so serious that it has taken over the _____ of G8 leaders meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia. U.S. President George W. Bush and the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair both _____ Iran and Syria for the violence. Mr. Bush said Israel had _____ _____ to defend itself from Hezbollah missile attacks. France, Italy and Russia have called for a ceasefire. The European Union has said Israel's use of _____ is too heavy, especially as 114 Lebanese civilians have been killed so far. Eight Israelis died on Sunday when Hezbollah rockets hit the _____ city of Haifa.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 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 "MIDDLE EAST" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about events in Israel and Lebanon.

- 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:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • thousands | • guerillas |
| • nearby | • agenda |
| • impossible | • blamed |
| • unlucky | • right |
| • rescue | • heavy |
| • suburb | • rockets |

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DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Do you always read news about the Middle East?
- c. What do you think of the current crisis?
- d. Who do you think is most to blame for the present conflict?
- e. Do you think Israel's response in killing 114 Lebanon citizens is too heavy?
- f. Why do you think G8 leaders cannot agree?
- g. If you worked in Lebanon, would you leave or stay?
- h. How far do you think the crisis will worsen?
- i. How serious do you think the situation is?
- j. What are the best steps to take for peace between Israel and its neighbors?

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. Do you think Iran and Syria are part of the conflict?
- d. What has happened to the Road Map for peace?
- e. What is America's policy towards Israel and Arab countries?
- f. What is your country's policy towards Israel and Arab countries?
- g. Do you think Israel was right to bomb Lebanon's only international airport?
- h. Do you think Israel should talk to get the release of its soldiers who were taken hostage?
- i. Who in the crisis would you most like to question and why?
- 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?

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SPEAKING

REPORT CARD: With your partner(s), complete the report card for each of the players in the current Middle East crisis:

	Pluses / Minuses	Grade (A-F)	Pluses / Minuses	Grade (A-F)
Israel				
Hezbollah				
Hamas				
Lebanon				
America				
Iran				

Change partners and share with each other your reports. Come to an agreement on any differences between you.

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 information about the background to the Middle East crisis. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. EVACUATED: Imagine you were evacuated from your country. Write a diary/journal entry for your experience. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which entry was best and why?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to any of the important people in the current crisis. Tell him/her what you think of his/her activities. Give him/her advice on what he/she should do now. Ask him/her three questions. Show your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Your classmates will write a reply.

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ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. crisis	emergency
b. escape	get away
c. rescue	free
d. trip	journey
e. suburb	neighborhood
f. guerillas	fighters
g. agenda	program
h. defend	protect
i. ceasefire	break in fighting
j. rockets	missiles

PHRASE MATCH:

a. people are leaving Lebanon	to go to safer countries
b. Lebanon's only international airport	has been bombed by Israel
c. difficult for ships to come in and	out of Lebanon's ports
d. make the overland trip by	bus to neighboring Syria
e. the embassy in	a Beirut suburb
f. Lebanon-based Hezbollah	guerillas
g. ...blamed Iran and Syria	for the violence
h. Bush said Israel had every right	to defend itself
i. The European Union has said Israel's	use of force is too heavy
j. Hezbollah rockets	hit the northern city of Haifa

GAP FILL:

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The crisis in the Middle East **means** thousands of people are leaving Lebanon to go to safer countries. Citizens of western and Arab countries are trying to fly or **sail** to nearby Cyprus. However, Lebanon's only international airport has been **bombed** by Israel, which makes it **almost** impossible for anyone to leave. Israeli warships are also making it difficult for ships to come in and out of Lebanon's ports. Many of those trying to **escape** have been unlucky. They have had to make the overland **trip** by bus to neighboring Syria. Britain has sent two warships to rescue its citizens if **necessary**. U.S. helicopters have already moved 21 diplomatic staff from the **embassy** in a Beirut suburb.

The attacks by Israel and Lebanon-**based** Hezbollah guerillas are becoming more dangerous every day. The situation is so **serious** that it has taken over the agenda of G8 leaders **meeting** in St. Petersburg, Russia. U.S. President George W. Bush and the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair **both** blamed Iran and Syria for the violence. Mr. Bush said Israel had every right to **defend** itself from Hezbollah missile attacks. France, Italy and Russia have **called** for a ceasefire. The European Union has said Israel's use of **force** is too heavy, especially as 114 Lebanese civilians have been killed so far. Eight Israelis died on Sunday when Hezbollah **rockets** hit the northern city of Haifa.