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## **Thousands escaping from Lebanon**

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**18 July, 2006**

## THE ARTICLE

### **Thousands escaping from Lebanon**

The current crisis enveloping the Middle East has resulted in the evacuation of thousands of bedraggled and bewildered citizens from America and European and Arab nations. Many of the evacuees flew from Lebanon, which is under continued Israeli bombardment, into nearby Cyprus. Britain has dispatched an aircraft carrier and another warship to take its citizens to safer shores if it is deemed necessary. Other countries have commandeered military transport planes to airlift their stranded compatriots to safety. U.S. military helicopters have already relocated 21 non-essential diplomatic staff from its fortified embassy in a Beirut suburb and are on standby to come to the aid of thousands of Americans residing in Lebanon. Many of those fleeing have been less fortunate and have had to make the overland trek to neighboring Syria, especially since Israel has blockaded Lebanon's ports.

The tit-for-tat attacks by Israel and Lebanon-based Hezbollah guerillas are escalating events into a major crisis. Such is the gravity of the situation that it has dominated the agenda of G8 leaders meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia. The opinions of the attending leaders are markedly divided. U.S. President George W. Bush and the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair were united in blaming Iran and Syria for the violence. Mr. Bush said Israel had every right to defend itself from missile attacks originating inside Lebanon. However, France, Italy and Russia have urged a ceasefire and called upon Israel to use "moderation" in its military reprisals. The European Union has called Israel's use of force "disproportionate" and condemned the killing of 114 Lebanese civilians. Eight Israelis were killed on Sunday and at least 20 injured when Hezbollah rockets struck the northern city of Haifa.

## WARM-UPS

**1. FLEEING:** Imagine you are fleeing 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 (or alleged players) in the current Middle East crisis? Conduct a survey of 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.

- The current crisis is a storm in a teacup and will soon blow over.
- Israel has every right to defend itself using maximum force.
- There will never be peace in the region.
- Israel should give the West Bank to Palestine. Only then will peace prevail.
- The UN should exert maximum influence to bring about peace once and for all.
- The region may see the use of nuclear weapons.
- Progress can only be made in the region when George W. Bush leaves office.
- 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 associate 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 being evacuated from Lebanon to America.      | T / F |
| b. Britain has sent warships to evacuate its citizens if necessary.      | T / F |
| c. All staff at the US Embassy in Beirut have left.                      | T / F |
| d. The USA is in control of Lebanon's ports.                             | T / F |
| e. Tit-for-tat attacks by Israel and Hezbollah are worsening the crisis. | T / F |
| f. G8 leader meeting in Russia made a unified statement on the crisis.   | 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 warranted.       | T / F |

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

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| a. enveloping       | uneven                                 |
| b. bewildered       | denied access to                       |
| c. bombardment      | restraint                              |
| d. compatriots      | confused                               |
| e. blockaded        | noticeably                             |
| f. tit-for-tat      | fellow citizens                        |
| g. markedly         | engulfing                              |
| h. moderation       | retaliation                            |
| i. reprisals        | an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth |
| j. disproportionate | attack                                 |

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

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. The current crisis enveloping  | an aircraft carrier         |
| b. under continued                | in its military reprisals   |
| c. Britain has dispatched         | compatriots to safety       |
| d. airlift their stranded         | into a major crisis         |
| e. make the overland trek         | the Middle East             |
| f. tit-for-tat                    | divided                     |
| g. escalating events              | attacks                     |
| h. markedly                       | to neighboring Syria        |
| i. use "moderation"               | of force "disproportionate" |
| j. The EU has called Israel's use | Israeli bombardment         |

Thousands escaping from Lebanon – 18 July, 2006 (harder)

## 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 current crisis \_\_\_\_\_ the Middle East has resulted in the evacuation of thousands of bedraggled and bewildered citizens from America and European and Arab nations. Many of the \_\_\_\_\_ flew from Lebanon, which is under continued Israeli bombardment, into nearby Cyprus. Britain has \_\_\_\_\_ an aircraft carrier and another warship to take its citizens to safer shores if it is \_\_\_\_\_ necessary. Other countries have commandeered military transport planes to airlift their stranded \_\_\_\_\_ to safety. U.S. military helicopters have already relocated 21 non-essential diplomatic staff from its \_\_\_\_\_ embassy in a Beirut suburb and are on standby to come to the aid of thousands of Americans residing in Lebanon. Many of those fleeing have been less fortunate and have had to make the \_\_\_\_\_ trek to neighboring Syria, especially since Israel has blockaded Lebanon's \_\_\_\_\_.

*compatriots*  
*evacuees*  
*ports*  
*deemed*  
*overland*  
*enveloping*  
*fortified*  
*dispatched*

The \_\_\_\_\_ attacks by Israel and Lebanon-based Hezbollah guerillas are escalating events into a major crisis. Such is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the situation that it has dominated the agenda of G8 leaders meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia. The opinions of the attending leaders are \_\_\_\_\_ divided. U.S. President George W. Bush and the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair were united in \_\_\_\_\_ Iran and Syria for the violence. Mr. Bush said Israel had every right to defend itself from missile attacks originating inside Lebanon. However, France, Italy and Russia have \_\_\_\_\_ a ceasefire and called upon Israel to use "moderation" in its military \_\_\_\_\_. The European Union has called Israel's use of force "\_\_\_\_\_" and condemned the killing of 114 Lebanese civilians. Eight Israelis were killed on Sunday and at least 20 injured when Hezbollah rockets \_\_\_\_\_ the northern city of Haifa.

*urged*  
*markedly*  
*disproportionate*  
*gravity*  
*reprisals*  
*struck*  
*tit-for-tat*  
*blaming*

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## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### Thousands escaping from Lebanon

The current crisis \_\_\_\_\_ the Middle East has resulted in the evacuation of thousands of bedraggled and \_\_\_\_\_ citizens from America and European and Arab nations. Many of the evacuees flew from Lebanon, which is under \_\_\_\_\_ Israeli bombardment, into nearby Cyprus. Britain has dispatched an aircraft carrier and another warship to take its citizens to safer shores if it is \_\_\_\_\_ necessary. Other countries have commandeered military transport planes to airlift their stranded compatriots to safety. U.S. military helicopters have already relocated 21 non-essential diplomatic staff from its \_\_\_\_\_ embassy in a Beirut suburb and are on standby to come \_\_\_\_\_ of thousands of Americans residing in Lebanon. Many of those fleeing have been less fortunate and have had to make the overland \_\_\_\_\_ neighboring Syria, especially since Israel has blockaded Lebanon's ports.

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## AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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:

- bedraggled
- continued
- dispatched
- stranded
- residing
- trek
- tit-for-tat
- gravity
- divided
- right
- moderation
- force

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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 from 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 "disproportionate"?
- f. Why do you think G8 leaders cannot reach a consensus?
- g. If you worked in Lebanon, would you leave or stay?
- h. How far do you think the crisis will escalate?
- i. How grave do you think the situation is in the Middle East?
- j. What are the surest steps to take that will lead to 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 actively involved in the conflict?
- d. What has happened to the Road Map for peace?
- e. What is America's policy towards Israeli-Arab relations?
- f. What is your country's policy towards Israeli-Arab relations?
- g. Do you think Israel was right to bomb Lebanon's only international airport?
- h. Do you think Israel should take any measures possible to secure the release of its soldiers 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 (or alleged 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 present conflict. 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 leading players in the current crisis. Tell him/her what you think of his/her activities. Give him/her advice on how he/she should move forward. Ask him/her three questions. Show your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Your classmates will write a reply.

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. enveloping	engulfing
b. bewildered	confused
c. bombardment	attack
d. compatriots	fellow citizens
e. blockaded	denied access to
f. tit-for-tat	an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth
g. markedly	noticeably
h. moderation	restraint
i. reprisals	retaliation
j. disproportionate	uneven

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. The current crisis enveloping	the Middle East
b. under continued	Israeli bombardment
c. Britain has dispatched	an aircraft carrier
d. airlift their stranded	compatriots to safety
e. make the overland trek	to neighboring Syria
f. tit-for-tat	attacks
g. escalating events	into a major crisis
h. markedly	divided
i. use "moderation"	in its military reprisals
j. The EU has called Israel's use	of force "disproportionate"

### GAP FILL:

#### Thousands escaping from Lebanon

The current crisis **enveloping** the Middle East has resulted in the evacuation of thousands of bedraggled and bewildered citizens from America and European and Arab nations. Many of the **evacuees** flew from Lebanon, which is under continued Israeli bombardment, into nearby Cyprus. Britain has **dispatched** an aircraft carrier and another warship to take its citizens to safer shores if it is **deemed** necessary. Other countries have commandeered military transport planes to airlift their stranded **compatriots** to safety. U.S. military helicopters have already relocated 21 non-essential diplomatic staff from its **fortified** embassy in a Beirut suburb and are on standby to come to the aid of thousands of Americans residing in Lebanon. Many of those fleeing have been less fortunate and have had to make the **overland** trek to neighboring Syria, especially since Israel has blockaded Lebanon's **ports**.

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