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Russia accused of cyber-war against Estonia

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20th May, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Russia accused of cyber-war against Estonia

The Estonian government has called in NATO Internet experts to try and stop hackers who are creating online havoc in the Baltic nation. In the past three weeks, there have been many cyber attacks on Estonia's governmental and private Internet sites, causing a lot of financial damage. It has also shown how vulnerable a country can be in cyberspace. Many Estonian politicians believe there is a "cyber-war" going on. Initial attacks appear to have originated from Russia, although the Kremlin has strongly denied any wrongdoing. The first attack coincided with fierce rioting by gangs of Estonia's Russian minority. They were angry after authorities removed a Soviet-era war memorial from its spot in the centre of the capital Tallinn. The statue was relocated to a war cemetery just outside of the city.

The possibility of a "virtual war" has sparked a potentially serious diplomatic crisis. At a meeting in Russia on Friday, a European Union chief told Russia's president Vladimir Putin that any attack on Estonia was the same as an attack on the whole of the EU. Meanwhile, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said that cyber attacks such as this one will "become more of an issue" in the future. He added that cyber terrorism was becoming much more of a threat to the world as familiarity with hacking technology grows and more criminals get involved in information technology. Estonia is a very "wired" country and needs maximum security to stay ahead of the hackers. It conducts its general elections online and most of the population uses Internet banking.

WARM-UPS

1. CYBERSPACE: Walk around the class and talk to other students about cyberspace. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

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

Estonia / NATO / hackers / havoc / financial damage / the Kremlin / rioting / diplomatic crises / cyber attacks / terrorism / criminals / being wired / security

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

3. "WIRED" SOCIETIES: How wired is your society? How wired would you like it to be? With your partner(s), talk about the everyday parts of your lives that you would like to see wired. Use this table to help you:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| • wired breakfast | • wired shopping |
| • wired transportation | • wired bathroom |
| • wired city | • wired bedroom |
| • wired school / classroom | • your choice _____ |

4. FUTURE WARS: Which of these things do you think countries will fight wars over? Talk about this with your partner(s). Rank them from 10 (extremely likely) to 1 (highly unlikely).

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| • cyberspace | • weapons of mass destruction |
| • space | • carbon emissions / greenhouse gases |
| • water | • food |
| • religion | • trade |

5. CYBER HEADLINES: In pairs / groups, talk about these headlines. What are the stories behind them? Change partners and share stories.

- 10-year-old takes over the White House
- Hacker steals all the world's e-money
- Two countries at war – soldiers at home
- Country X cyber-napped by cyber-terrorists
- Cyber-mafia destroy entire world Internet - billions of computers melt
- Bill Gates becomes first world president

6. QUICK DEBATE: Have this quick debate with your partner(s). Students A think Russia is at cyber-war with Estonia; students B think Russia is not at cyber-war with Estonia. Change partners and topics every two minutes.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. NATO is helping Estonia protect its computer systems. | T / F |
| b. Cyber attacks have cost Estonia a lot of money. | T / F |
| c. Russia has launched hundreds of cyber attacks against Estonia. | T / F |
| d. The Kremlin has denied doing anything wrong. | T / F |
| e. There is now a "virtual war" between Russia and Estonia. | T / F |
| f. A senior US official said cyber attacks will decrease in the future. | T / F |
| g. The official is worried about criminals being more familiar with IT. | T / F |
| h. Estonian politics and banking rely a lot on the Internet. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. experts | exposed |
| b. havoc | mixed up |
| c. vulnerable | violent |
| d. wrongdoing | problem |
| e. fierce | crime |
| f. sparked | possibly |
| g. potentially | chaos |
| h. issue | ignited |
| i. involved | carries out |
| j. conducts | specialists |

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

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a. The Estonian government has called | vulnerable a country can be |
| b. creating | of a threat to the world |
| c. It has also shown how | memorial |
| d. Initial attacks appear to | issue in the future |
| e. authorities removed a Soviet-era war | in NATO Internet experts |
| f. sparked a potentially | elections online |
| g. become more of an | ahead of the hackers |
| h. cyber terrorism was becoming much more | online havoc |
| i. maximum security to stay | have originated from Russia |
| j. It conducts its general | serious diplomatic crisis |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Russia accused of cyber-war against Estonia

The Estonian government has called in NATO Internet _____ to try and stop hackers who are creating online _____ in the Baltic nation. In the past three weeks, there have been many cyber attacks on Estonia's governmental and _____ Internet sites, causing a lot of financial damage. It has also shown how _____ a country can be in cyberspace. Many Estonian politicians believe there is a "cyber-war" going on. _____ attacks appear to have originated from Russia, although the Kremlin has strongly _____ any wrongdoing. The first attack coincided with fierce rioting by gangs of Estonia's Russian minority. They were angry after authorities removed a Soviet-era war _____ from its spot in the centre of the capital Tallinn. The statue was relocated to a war _____ just outside of the city.

memorial

private

initial

experts

cemetery

havoc

denied

vulnerable

The possibility of a "virtual war" has _____ a potentially serious diplomatic crisis. At a meeting in Russia on Friday, a European Union _____ told Russia's president Vladimir Putin that any attack on Estonia was the same as an attack on the _____ of the EU. Meanwhile, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said that cyber attacks such as this one will "become more of an _____ " in the future. He added that cyber terrorism was becoming much more of a _____ to the world as familiarity with hacking technology grows and more criminals get _____ in information technology. Estonia is a very "wired" country and needs _____ security to stay ahead of the hackers. It _____ its general elections online and most of the population uses Internet banking.

involved

whole

conducts

chief

threat

sparked

issue

maximum

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Russia accused of cyber-war against Estonia

The Estonian government _____ Internet experts to try and stop hackers who are _____ in the Baltic nation. In the past three weeks, there have been many cyber attacks on Estonia's governmental and private Internet sites, _____ financial damage. It has also shown how vulnerable _____ cyberspace. Many Estonian politicians believe there is a "cyber-war" going on. Initial _____ originated from Russia, although the Kremlin has strongly _____. The first attack coincided with fierce rioting by gangs of Estonia's Russian minority. They were angry after authorities removed a Soviet-era war memorial _____ centre of the capital Tallinn. The statue was relocated to a war cemetery just outside of the city.

The possibility of a "virtual war" _____ serious diplomatic crisis. At a meeting in Russia on Friday, a European Union chief told Russia's president Vladimir Putin that any attack on Estonia _____ attack on the whole of the EU. Meanwhile, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said that cyber attacks _____ "become more of an issue" in the future. He added that cyber terrorism was becoming much _____ the world as familiarity with hacking technology grows and more criminals get involved in information technology. Estonia is a very "wired" country and needs maximum security _____ the hackers. It conducts its general elections online and most of the population uses Internet banking.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

cyber	space
--------------	--------------

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• called• havoc• vulnerable• denied• authorities• relocated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sparked• the same• issue• involved• maximum• population
--	--

STUDENT SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about CYBERSPACE in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Do you think Russia would really start a cyber war against one of its neighbours?
- c) Why do you think someone is creating online havoc in Estonia?
- d) What do you know about Estonia?
- e) Do you think countries are vulnerable in cyberspace?
- f) What kind of harm do you think hackers could do to a country?
- g) What do you think of NATO getting involved in this issue?
- h) Do you think a cyber-war could lead to a military war?
- i) Do you think Estonia's government was wrong to relocate the Soviet war memorial?
- j) Has there ever been fierce rioting in your country?



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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What diplomatic crises has your country faced recently?
- c) Do you think a "virtual war" is dangerous?
- d) What do you think of the EU's strong support for Estonia against Russia?
- e) Do you think the Internet has created a more dangerous war?
- f) How do you think cyber-terrorists might use the Internet?
- g) Do you think there are dangers in a country becoming too wired?
- h) How wired is your country?
- i) What do you now do online that you used to do in the "real" world?
- 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

CYBER ATTACK:

What would you do if cyber-terrorists attacked you? With your partner(s), decide how dangerous these actions might be. Agree on the steps you would take in these situations:

Form of attack	Dangers	Your actions
Cyber-terrorists take over your e-mail accounts		
Cyber-terrorists get hold of your bank and credit cards		
Cyber-terrorists monitor your daily movements		
Cyber-terrorists take your name away		
Cyber-terrorists cancel your ID cards and passport		
Cyber-terrorists copy your fingerprint and DNA information		

- Change partners and share your ideas.
- Give advice on more actions you could each take.
- Write notes for a movie story about a cyber-attack on you.
- Share your movie story ideas and vote on the best one.

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Russia accused of cyber-war against Estonia

The Estonian government has (1) _____ in NATO Internet experts to try and stop hackers who are creating online (2) _____ in the Baltic nation. In the past three weeks, there have been many cyber attacks on Estonia's governmental and private Internet sites, causing a lot of financial damage. It has also (3) _____ how vulnerable a country can be in cyberspace. Many Estonian politicians believe there is a "cyber-war" going (4) _____. Initial attacks appear to have originated from Russia, although the Kremlin has strongly denied any (5) _____. The first attack coincided with fierce rioting by gangs of Estonia's Russian minority. They were angry after authorities removed a Soviet-era war memorial from its (6) _____ in the centre of the capital Tallinn. The statue was relocated to a war cemetery just outside of the city.

The possibility of a "virtual war" has (7) _____ a potentially serious diplomatic crisis. At a meeting in Russia on Friday, a European Union chief told Russia's president Vladimir Putin that any attack on Estonia was the same as an attack on the (8) _____ of the EU. (9) _____, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said that cyber attacks such as this one will "become more of an issue" in the future. He added that cyber terrorism was becoming much more of a (10) _____ to the world as familiarity with hacking technology grows and more criminals (11) _____ involved in information technology. Estonia is a very "wired" country and needs maximum security to stay ahead of the hackers. It conducts its (12) _____ elections online and most of the population uses Internet banking.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. | (a) called | (b) phoned | (c) shouted | (d) talked |
| 2. | (a) haddock | (b) havoc | (c) hammock | (d) hemlock |
| 3. | (a) showing | (b) shorn | (c) showed | (d) shown |
| 4. | (a) over | (b) out | (c) on | (d) in |
| 5. | (a) wrongly | (b) wrongdoing | (c) wrongdoer | (d) wrongful |
| 6. | (a) jot | (b) cot | (c) spot | (d) dot |
| 7. | (a) sparkler | (b) sparking | (c) spark | (d) sparked |
| 8. | (a) whole | (b) all | (c) every | (d) overall |
| 9. | (a) Meanwhile | (b) While | (c) But | (d) Although |
| 10. | (a) thread | (b) treat | (c) threat | (d) thrash |
| 11. | (a) got | (b) gets | (c) getting | (d) get |
| 12. | (a) generate | (b) general | (c) gender | (d) gentle |

WRITING:

Write about cyberspace for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

Lined writing area consisting of multiple horizontal lines for writing.

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 about the attacks on Estonia's cyberspace. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. INTERNET POSTER: Make a poster about how the Internet has changed your life. Show your poster to your class in the next lesson. Vote on the best one(s).

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about cyber-war.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to a hacker. Ask him/her three questions about hacking. Give him/her three pieces of advice about stopping hacking. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. experts | specialists |
| b. havoc | chaos |
| c. vulnerable | exposed |
| d. wrongdoing | crime |
| e. fierce | violent |
| f. sparked | ignited |
| g. potentially | possibly |
| h. issue | problem |
| i. involved | mixed up |
| j. conducts | carries out |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a. The Estonian government has called | in NATO Internet experts |
| b. creating | online havoc |
| c. It has also shown how | vulnerable a country can be |
| d. Initial attacks appear to | have originated from Russia |
| e. authorities removed a Soviet-era war | memorial |
| f. sparked a potentially | serious diplomatic crisis |
| g. become more of an | issue in the future |
| h. cyber terrorism was becoming much more | of a threat to the world |
| i. maximum security to stay | ahead of the hackers |
| j. It conducts its general | elections online |

GAP FILL:

Russia accused of cyber-war against Estonia

The Estonian government has called in NATO Internet **experts** to try and stop hackers who are creating online **havoc** in the Baltic nation. In the past three weeks, there have been many cyber attacks on Estonia's governmental and **private** Internet sites, causing a lot of financial damage. It has also shown how **vulnerable** a country can be in cyberspace. Many Estonian politicians believe there is a "cyber-war" going on. **Initial** attacks appear to have originated from Russia, although the Kremlin has strongly **denied** any wrongdoing. The first attack coincided with fierce rioting by gangs of Estonia's Russian minority. They were angry after authorities removed a Soviet-era war **memorial** from its spot in the centre of the capital Tallinn. The statue was relocated to a war **cemetery** just outside of the city.

The possibility of a "virtual war" has **sparked** a potentially serious diplomatic crisis. At a meeting in Russia on Friday, a European Union **chief** told Russia's president Vladimir Putin that any attack on Estonia was the same as an attack on the **whole** of the EU. Meanwhile, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said that cyber attacks such as this one will "become more of an **issue**" in the future. He added that cyber terrorism was becoming much more of a **threat** to the world as familiarity with hacking technology grows and more criminals get **involved** in information technology. Estonia is a very "wired" country and needs **maximum** security to stay ahead of the hackers. It **conducts** its general elections online and most of the population uses Internet banking.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - a 2 - b 3 - d 4 - c 5 - b 6 - c 7 - d 8 - a 9 - a 10 - c 11 - d 12 - b