

www.**Breaking News English**.com
Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"

The Breaking News English.com Resource Book

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

U.S. military equipment on sale on eBay

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0804/080412-ebay.html>

Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

THE ARTICLE

Sensitive U.S. military items are frequently for sale on eBay, according to a new report from the American government. Many of the items are in perfect working order and could be used against American troops by its enemies. Investigators working undercover discovered thousands of stolen pieces of army equipment that should never have left military hands. These included super high-tech night vision goggles that were specially made to spot U.S. troops in a war zone. Other items included components for F-14 fighter jets and army combat uniforms. The report said these items could have been "used directly against our troops and allies". Indeed, Iraqi fighters wore stolen U.S. army uniforms in January 2007 when they sneaked into a US base in Iraq and killed five American soldiers.

EBay said it was doing its best to prevent the sale of banned and sensitive military items. A senior public relations officer Kim Rubey told reporters that the online auction site had 113 million items listed for sale, and it was easy for stolen items to slip through the net. EBay's Vice President Todd Cohen said the company does its utmost to prevent the sale of items that could put U.S. troops in harm's way: "We created prohibited and restricted items policies and built tools using state-of-the-art technology to enforce those policies," he said. The U.S. Army admitted most of the items were stolen from its own military buildings. A high-ranking spokeswoman Sarah H. Finnicum called the ongoing theft, "property accountability and visibility challenges".

WARM-UPS

1. MILITARY EQUIPMENT: Walk around the class and talk to other students about military equipment. 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.

sensitive / troops / enemies / investigators / night vision / war zone / uniforms / doing your best / online auction / slip through the net / state of the art tools / theft

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. HEADLINE PREDICTION: With your partner(s), use the words in the "Chat" activity above to predict what the news article will be about. Once you have your story, change partners and share them. Who was closest to the real story?

4. EBAY ADJECTIVES: Decide on 6 student possessions to put in the table. Auction them to the class. Pairs or groups of students use adjectives that describe the items instead of money to bid for them. The winning bid is the team who holds up the most adjectives to describe each item.

Items for auction	Adjectives
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

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

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A **strongly** believe that people should go to prison for buying sensitive military equipment online; Students B **strongly** believe it's not the average person's fault if they buy something they see on eBay, sensitive or not. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. The U.S. Army is raising money by selling its used equipment online. | T / F |
| b. Night-vision goggles that could endanger U.S. troops were on eBay. | T / F |
| c. F-14 fighter jets are also for sale on eBay. | T / F |
| d. Iraqi fighters used stolen Army uniforms to kill U.S. soldiers. | T / F |
| e. eBay has 113 million items for sale on its online auction website. | T / F |
| f. eBay said it was almost impossible for stolen items to be sold online. | T / F |
| g. Most of the military equipment on eBay was stolen from Army bases. | T / F |
| h. An Army spokeswoman described theft as being invisible challenges. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. frequently | a. fighting |
| 2. undercover | b. continual |
| 3. components | c. crept |
| 4. combat | d. banned |
| 5. sneaked | e. routinely |
| 6. prevent | f. best |
| 7. utmost | g. secretly |
| 8. prohibited | h. acknowledged |
| 9. admitted | i. parts |
| 10. ongoing | j. stop |

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

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. U.S. military items are frequently for | a. working order |
| 2. Many of the items are in perfect | b. technology |
| 3. equipment that should never have | c. US base in Iraq |
| 4. specially made to spot | d. slip through the net |
| 5. they sneaked into a | e. left military hands |
| 6. prevent the sale of banned and | f. to prevent the sale |
| 7. it was easy for stolen items to | g. U.S. troops in a war zone |
| 8. the company does its utmost | h. visibility challenges |
| 9. tools using state-of-the-art | i. sale on eBay |
| 10. property accountability and | j. sensitive military items |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Sensitive U.S. military items are frequently for _____ on eBay, according to a new report from the American government. Many of the items are in _____ working order and could be used against American troops by its enemies. Investigators working undercover discovered thousands of stolen pieces of army equipment that _____ never have left military hands. These included super high-tech night _____ goggles that were specially made to _____ U.S. troops in a war zone. Other items included components for F-14 fighter jets and army combat uniforms. The report said these items could have been "used _____ against our troops and _____". Indeed, Iraqi fighters wore stolen U.S. army uniforms in January 2007 when they _____ into a US base in Iraq and killed five American soldiers.

vision
allies
perfect
sneaked
spot
sale
directly
should

EBay said it was doing its _____ to prevent the sale of banned and sensitive military items. A senior public _____ officer Kim Rubey told reporters that the online auction site had 113 million items listed for sale, and it was easy for stolen items to _____ through the net. EBay's Vice President Todd Cohen said the company does its _____ to prevent the sale of items that could put U.S. troops in _____ way: "We created prohibited and restricted items policies and built tools using state-of-the-_____ technology to enforce those policies," he said. The U.S. Army admitted most of the items were stolen from its own military buildings. A high-ranking spokeswoman Sarah H. Finnicum called the ongoing _____, "property accountability and visibility _____".

theft
slip
harm's
relations
challenges
best
art
utmost

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Sensitive U.S. military items _____ on eBay, according to a new report from the American government. Many of the items _____ and could be used against American troops by its enemies. Investigators working undercover discovered thousands of stolen pieces of army equipment that should never _____. These included super high-tech night vision goggles that were _____ U.S. troops in a war zone. Other items included components for F-14 fighter jets and army combat uniforms. The report said these items could have been "used directly _____". Indeed, Iraqi fighters wore stolen U.S. army uniforms in January 2007 _____ US base in Iraq and killed five American soldiers.

EBay said it was _____ the sale of banned and sensitive military items. A senior public relations officer Kim Rubey told reporters that the online auction site had 113 million items listed for sale, and it was easy for stolen items to _____. EBay's Vice President Todd Cohen said the company _____ the sale of items that could put U.S. troops in harm's way: "We created prohibited and restricted items policies and built tools using _____ to enforce those policies," he said. The U.S. Army admitted most of the items were stolen from its own military buildings. _____ Sarah H. Finnicum called the ongoing theft, "property accountability _____".

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

military	equipment
-----------------	------------------

- 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">• frequently• perfect• undercover• spot• components• sneaked	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• best• net• in harm's way• art• admitted• challenges
---	--

STUDENT EBAY SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about eBay 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) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'eBay'?
- c) Do you think this article would make Americans worry a lot?
- d) Would you buy a piece of sensitive military equipment if it was cheap?
- e) How embarrassing is this news to the U.S. military?
- f) Who do you think might buy components for an F-14 fighter jet?
- g) How do you think U.S. troops might feel knowing their enemy could have high-tech U.S. equipment bought on eBay?
- h) Have you ever bought anything on eBay?
- i) Do you think America's enemies will now start looking on eBay for military equipment?
- j) What should happen to people caught selling military equipment online?

U.S. military equipment on sale on eBay - 12th April, 2008
More free lessons at www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com

DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think eBay is doing its best to prevent the sale of military equipment?
- c) Should governments keep a tighter check on online sales?
- d) Should eBay be tightly controlled as part of the war on terror?
- e) Do you think eBay's "state-of-the-art" technology is good enough?
- f) What other dangerous items might be sold on eBay?
- g) What things would you like to try and sell on eBay?
- h) What are "property accountability and visibility challenges"?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Sarah H. Finnicum?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

U.S. military equipment on sale on eBay - 12th April, 2008
More free lessons at www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com

LANGUAGE

Sensitive U.S. military items are (1) ____ for sale on eBay, according to a new report from the American government. Many of the items are (2) ____ perfect working order and could be used against American troops by its enemies. Investigators working (3) ____ discovered thousands of stolen pieces of army equipment that should never have left military (4) _____. These included super high-tech night vision goggles that were (5) ____ made to spot U.S. troops in a war zone. Other items included components for F-14 fighter jets and army combat uniforms. The report said these items could have been "used directly against our troops and allies". Indeed, Iraqi fighters wore stolen U.S. army uniforms in January 2007 when they (6) ____ into a US base in Iraq and killed five American soldiers.

Ebay said it was doing its best to (7) _____ the sale of banned and sensitive military items. A senior public relations officer Kim Rubey told reporters that the online auction site had 113 million items listed for sale, and it was easy for stolen items to slip (8) _____ the net. EBay's Vice President Todd Cohen said the company does its (9) _____ to prevent the sale of items that could put U.S. troops in (10) _____ way: "We created prohibited and restricted items policies and built tools using state-of-the-(11) _____ technology to enforce those policies," he said. The U.S. Army admitted most of the items were stolen from its own military buildings. A high-ranking spokeswoman Sarah H. Finnicum called (12) _____ ongoing theft, "property accountability and visibility challenges".

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) frequency | (b) frequented | (c) frequent | (d) frequently |
| 2. | (a) by | (b) on | (c) in | (d) with |
| 3. | (a) understand | (b) undercover | (c) underage | (d) underpants |
| 4. | (a) hands | (b) palms | (c) fingers | (d) thumbs |
| 5. | (a) exactly | (b) particular | (c) specially | (d) for |
| 6. | (a) stroked | (b) soaked | (c) staked | (d) sneaked |
| 7. | (a) prevail | (b) prevent | (c) previous | (d) preview |
| 8. | (a) through | (b) over | (c) on | (d) in |
| 9. | (a) utterly | (b) utmost | (c) utility | (d) utopia |
| 10. | (a) alarm's | (b) alarms | (c) harm's | (d) harms |
| 11. | (a) art | (b) hobby | (c) design | (d) concept |
| 12. | (a) them | (b) an | (c) a | (d) the |

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 out about the sale of U.S. military items on eBay. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. AUCTION RULES: Make a poster showing the rules for online auction sites like eBay – for sellers and buyers. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. EBAY: Write a magazine article about stolen military items that were sold on eBay and then used against the army they were stolen from. Include imaginary interviews with a soldier who suffered and an eBay representative.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to eBay's Vice President. Ask him three questions about his company. Give him three pieces of advice on what he should do to ensure no more sensitive military equipment is sold on his site. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

6. DIARY / JOURNAL: Imagine you are an undercover investigator trying to find out how much sensitive military equipment there is on eBay. Write your diary / journal entry for one day of your undercover working week. Be sure to write about a huge success. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | | | |
|-----|------------|----|--------------|
| 1. | frequently | a. | routinely |
| 2. | undercover | b. | secretly |
| 3. | components | c. | parts |
| 4. | combat | d. | fighting |
| 5. | sneaked | e. | crept |
| 6. | prevent | f. | stop |
| 7. | utmost | g. | best |
| 8. | prohibited | h. | banned |
| 9. | admitted | i. | acknowledged |
| 10. | ongoing | j. | continual |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | | | |
|-----|--|----|---------------------------|
| 1. | U.S. military items are frequently for | a. | sale on eBay |
| 2. | Many of the items are in perfect | b. | working order |
| 3. | equipment that should never have | c. | left military hands |
| 4. | specially made to spot | d. | U.S. troops in a war zone |
| 5. | they sneaked into a | e. | US base in Iraq |
| 6. | prevent the sale of banned and | f. | sensitive military items |
| 7. | it was easy for stolen items to | g. | slip through the net |
| 8. | the company does its utmost | h. | to prevent the sale |
| 9. | tools using state-of-the-art | i. | technology |
| 10. | property accountability and | j. | visibility challenges |

GAP FILL:

U.S. military equipment on sale on eBay

Sensitive U.S. military items are frequently for **sale** on eBay, according to a new report from the American government. Many of the items are in **perfect** working order and could be used against American troops by its enemies. Investigators working undercover discovered thousands of stolen pieces of army equipment that **should** never have left military hands. These included super high-tech night **vision** goggles that were specially made to **spot** U.S. troops in a war zone. Other items included components for F-14 fighter jets and army combat uniforms. The report said these items could have been "used **directly** against our troops and **allies**". Indeed, Iraqi fighters wore stolen U.S. army uniforms in January 2007 when they **sneaked** into a US base in Iraq and killed five American soldiers.

EBay said it was doing its **best** to prevent the sale of banned and sensitive military items. A senior public **relations** officer Kim Rubey told reporters that the online auction site had 113 million items listed for sale, and it was easy for stolen items to **slip** through the net. EBay's Vice President Todd Cohen said the company does its **utmost** to prevent the sale of items that could put U.S. troops in **harm's** way: "We created prohibited and restricted items policies and built tools using state-of-the-**art** technology to enforce those policies," he said. The U.S. Army admitted most of the items were stolen from its own military buildings. A high-ranking spokeswoman Sarah H. Finnicum called the ongoing **theft**, "property accountability and visibility **challenges**".

LANGUAGE WORK

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