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Level 1 – 16th November 2023

Diseases in 'Factor X' could be next global threat

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2311/231116-factor-x-1.html>

Contents

The Reading	2
Phrase Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Survey	6
Writing and Speaking	7
Writing	8

Please try Levels 0, 2 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2311/231116-factor-x-1.html>

Old bacteria under the ground could contain many deadly diseases. The bacteria have been trapped in permafrost for thousands of years. Permafrost is long-frozen ground. It is common in mountains and near the North and South Poles. It is melting because of climate change. This could release unknown, harmful viruses. Scientists are calling these 'Factor X'. An infectious diseases professor said we know little about Factor X.

There are viruses in the permafrost that are up to a million years old. A virologist said these unknown, "ancient viruses" could be terrifying because we have never seen them before. He also said deadly diseases like smallpox could be released worldwide. Factor X could be an even bigger problem. However, scientists say the release of methane is a bigger danger from melting permafrost. Methane is 80 times more harmful than CO₂.

Sources: <https://www.newsweek.com/scientists-fear-cataclysmic-disease-emerge-earth-permafrost-climate-change-pandemic-1842724>
<https://www.sciencealert.com/a-dangerous-factor-x-could-be-lurking-in-earths-ice-scientist-warns>
<https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/world/rising-global-temperature-could-awaken-ancient-pathogens-in-russian-permafrost/ar-AA1jS25C>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2311/231116-factor-x-1.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. bacteria under | a. Poles |
| 2. The bacteria have been trapped | b. harmful viruses |
| 3. near the North and South | c. about Factor X |
| 4. It is melting because of | d. the ground |
| 5. This could release unknown, | e. climate change |
| 6. Scientists are calling | f. diseases professor |
| 7. An infectious | g. in permafrost |
| 8. we know little | h. these 'Factor X' |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. up to a | a. viruses |
| 2. ancient | b. harmful than CO2 |
| 3. we have never seen | c. like smallpox |
| 4. deadly diseases | d. an even bigger problem |
| 5. Factor X could be | e. permafrost |
| 6. the release | f. them before |
| 7. a bigger danger from melting | g. million years old |
| 8. Methane is 80 times more | h. of methane |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2311/231116-factor-x-1.html>

Old bacteria (1) _____ could contain many deadly diseases. The bacteria (2) _____ in permafrost for thousands of years. Permafrost is long-frozen ground. It (3) _____ mountains and near the North and South Poles. It (4) _____ of climate change. This could release unknown, harmful viruses. Scientists (5) _____ 'Factor X'. An infectious diseases professor said we (6) _____ Factor X.

There (7) _____ the permafrost that are up to a (8) _____. A virologist said these unknown, "ancient viruses" could be terrifying because we have (9) _____ before. He also said deadly diseases like smallpox could (10) _____. Factor X could be an even bigger problem. However, scientists say (11) _____ methane is a bigger danger from melting permafrost. Methane is 80 (12) _____ than CO2.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2311/231116-factor-x-1.html>

Old bacteria under the ground could contain many deadly diseases. The bacteria have been trapped in permafrost for thousands of years. Permafrost is long-frozen ground. It is common in mountains and near the North and South Poles. It is melting because of climate change. This could release unknown, harmful viruses. Scientists are calling these 'Factor X'. An infectious diseases professor said we know little about Factor X. There are viruses in the permafrost that are up to a million years old. A virologist said these unknown, "ancient viruses" could be terrifying because we have never seen them before. He also said deadly diseases like smallpox could be released worldwide. Factor X could be an even bigger problem. However, scientists say the release of methane is a bigger danger from melting permafrost. Methane is 80 times more harmful than CO2.

WORLD THREATS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2311/231116-factor-x-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about world threats 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.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

