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60th anniversary of Hiroshima bombing

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Today's contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
After Reading	6
Discussion	7
Speaking	8
Listening Gap Fill	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

6 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

60th anniversary of Hiroshima bombing

BNE: Japan marks the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima today. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and other world dignitaries will attend a memorial service in Hiroshima's Peace Park, close to the bomb's epicenter. The 70-minute-long ceremony will include a water-blessing ritual dedicated to those who died begging and dying of thirst after the bomb fell. Survivors and descendants of those who died will also attend the service. Strangely, August 6 is not a holiday in Hiroshima. Neither will Hiroshima's people stop their activities at 8.15 AM, the time of the detonation, to reflect on the occasion.

The bomb was the first use of nuclear weapons on civilians. The blast and its aftermath wiped out half of Hiroshima's inhabitants in a scorching flash and completely flattened 90 per cent of the city's buildings and infrastructure. An estimated 140,000 people died instantly or in the following days. Three days later, a second bomb annihilated a further 80,000 in Nagasaki. There are 40,000 survivors of the bomb alive today, with an average age of 71. Many commentators believe the attacks were essential to bring an early end to World War II and avoid greater numbers being killed in a land invasion of Japan. Others consider them to be mankind's most evil acts of barbarity.

WARM-UPS

1. NUCLEAR WEAPONS: In pairs / groups, talk about nuclear weapons. What lessons have we learned or should we have learned? Use the words below to help your conversations:

- Hiroshima
- The Cold War
- Deterrent
- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
- Iran
- North Korea
- Nuclear terrorism
- A nuclear free world
- World War III
- Other

2. HIROSHIMA: What do you want to know about Hiroshima and the bombing? Write down three questions. After you have finished, ask your questions to your classmates. Change partners and talk about your findings.

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

Japan / nuclear weapons / Hiroshima / memorial services / begging for water / time for reflection / 140,000 people dead / World War II

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

4. ATOM BOMB: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "atom bomb". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. OPINIONS: In pairs / groups, talk about how far you agree with the following opinions on Hiroshima and nuclear weapons:

- a. August 6 should become the very first worldwide holiday, called "Hiroshima Day".
- b. Nuclear weapons will never be used again to kill people.
- c. The dropping of the bombs in Japan saved lives by ending WWII early.
- d. Hiroshima is living proof that human spirit can never be defeated.
- e. The world should be very ruthless with North Korea's and Iran's nuclear ambitions.
- f. In the near future, terrorists will get hold of nuclear weapons.
- g. Every capital city in the world should have a Hiroshima memorial museum to show the horrors of atomic bombs.
- h. All schoolchildren around the world should have a "Hiroshima lesson" on Aug. 6.

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think the world will be nuclear weapons free one day. Students B think the world will never be nuclear weapons free. Change partners often.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. An atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima 60 years ago today. | T / F |
| b. George W. Bush will attend a memorial service in Hiroshima. | T / F |
| c. A ceremony will remember people who died while begging for water. | T / F |
| d. August 6 is a holiday in Hiroshima. | T / F |
| e. The bomb's blast wiped out half of Hiroshima's population. | T / F |
| f. The detonation left 30 per cent of the city in total ruin. | T / F |
| g. An equal number died three days later in the Nagasaki bombing. | T / F |
| h. The atomic bombings of Japan expedited the end of WWII. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. marks | after-effects |
| b. dignitaries | contemplate |
| c. ritual | leaders |
| d. dedicated | inhumanity |
| e. reflect | leveled |
| f. aftermath | accelerate |
| g. flattened | decimated |
| h. annihilated | commemorates |
| i. expedite | devoted |
| j. barbarity | ceremony |

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

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a. the 60 th anniversary of | dedicated to those who died |
| b. world | acts of barbarity |
| c. close to the bomb's | 90 per cent of the city's buildings |
| d. a water-blessing ritual | a further 80,000 in Nagasaki |
| e. reflect on the | wiped out half... |
| f. its aftermath | the end of World War II |
| g. completely flattened | the atomic bombing of Hiroshima |
| h. a second bomb annihilated | dignitaries |
| i. essential to expedite | epicenter |
| j. mankind's most evil | occasion |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

60th anniversary of Hiroshima bombing

BNE: Japan _____ the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima today. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and other world _____ will attend a memorial _____ in Hiroshima's Peace Park, close to the bomb's _____. The 70-minute-long ceremony will include a water-blessing _____ dedicated to those who died _____ and dying of thirst after the bomb fell. Survivors and _____ of those who died will also attend the service. Strangely, August 6 is not a holiday in Hiroshima. Neither will Hiroshima's people stop their activities at 8.15 AM, the time of the _____, to reflect on the occasion.

The bomb was the first use of nuclear weapons on _____. The blast and its _____ wiped out half of Hiroshima's inhabitants in a _____ flash and completely flattened 90 per cent of the city's buildings and _____. An estimated 140,000 people died instantly or in the following days. Three days later, a second bomb _____ a further 80,000 in Nagasaki. There are 40,000 survivors of the bomb alive today, with an average age of 71. Many commentators believe the attacks were essential to _____ the end of World War II and avoid greater numbers being killed in a land _____ of Japan. Others consider them to be mankind's most evil acts of _____.

descendants

epicenter

ritual

dignitaries

detonation

service

begging

marks

expedite

aftermath

annihilated

barbarity

civilians

infrastructure

invasion

scorching

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 gap fill. 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 "HIROSHIMA" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about Hiroshima and nuclear weapons today.

- 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:

- anniversary
- dignitaries
- epicenter
- ritual
- begging
- descendants
- civilians
- wiped out
- infrastructure
- annihilated
- expedite
- barbarity

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What does Hiroshima mean to you?
- d. What did you learn about Hiroshima at school?
- e. What should children learn about Hiroshima at school?
- f. What do you think are the feelings of the people of Hiroshima today concerning the 60th anniversary?
- g. What kind of message would you leave at the Peace Park in Hiroshima?
- h. Do you think nuclear weapons will ever be used again?
- i. Do you think all nuclear weapons should be scrapped?
- j. Why do countries have or want nuclear weapons?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What adjectives would you use to describe what you read?
- d. Do you think the bombings were necessary to end WWII early?
- e. What are your images of the bombing of Hiroshima?
- f. Do you think Japanese people have a unique sense of the horror of war?
- g. Do you think August 6 should be commemorated globally every year with a "World Hiroshima Day" holiday?
- h. What would happen if all nuclear weapons disappeared tomorrow?
- i. What questions would you ask one of the survivors of the bomb?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

HIROSHIMA LEGACY: You are part of the Nuclear Weapons Elimination Council. Your project is called "Hiroshima Legacy". You must persuade all countries that have or want nuclear weapons to destroy them or forget about them. Write down the reasons why you think these countries have / want nuclear weapons and why they do not need them:

COUNTRY	REASONS FOR HAVING / WANTING	REASONS FOR NOT NEEDING
USA		
China		
Israel		
North Korea		
India		
UK		
Iran		

After you have finished, change partners and share and compare what you talked about.

Discuss whether the reasons for having or wanting nuclear weapons are legitimate for each country.

Speculate on what the leaders of each country might say about your reasons why they do not need nuclear weapons.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

60th anniversary of Hiroshima bombing

BNE: Japan marks the 60th anniversary of the _____ of Hiroshima today. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and other world _____ will attend a memorial service in Hiroshima's Peace Park, close to the bomb's _____. The 70-minute-long ceremony will include a water-blessing _____ dedicated to those who died _____ and dying of thirst after the bomb fell. Survivors and descendants of those who died will also attend the service. Strangely, August 6 is not a holiday in Hiroshima. Neither will Hiroshima's people stop their activities at 8.15 AM, the time of the _____, to reflect on the occasion.

The bomb was the first use of nuclear weapons on _____. The blast and its aftermath wiped out half of Hiroshima's _____ in a scorching flash and completely _____ 90 per cent of the city's buildings and infrastructure. An estimated 140,000 people died instantly or in the following days. Three days later, a second bomb _____ a further 80,000 in Nagasaki. There are 40,000 survivors of the bomb alive today, with an average age of 71. Many commentators believe the attacks were essential to _____ the end of World War II and avoid greater numbers being killed in a land _____ of Japan. Others consider them to be mankind's most evil acts of _____.

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 on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. NUCLEAR FREE CHARTER: Make a charter that outlines why all nuclear weapons should be scrapped. Include the promises all countries must make to ensure a peaceful world in the future. Show your charters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all include similar things?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to a survivor of the atom bombs. Write your thoughts on the bombings and ask some questions about the survivor's experiences. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about and ask similar things? Discuss what you think the answers to your questions might be.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. marks	commemorates
b. dignitaries	leaders
c. ritual	ceremony
d. dedicated	devoted
e. reflect	contemplate
f. aftermath	after-effects
g. flattened	leveled
h. annihilated	decimated
i. expedite	accelerate
j. barbarity	inhumanity

PHRASE MATCH:

a. the 60 th anniversary of	the atomic bombing of Hiroshima
b. world	dignitaries
c. close to the bomb's	epicenter
d. a water-blessing ritual	dedicated to those who died
e. reflect on the	occasion
f. its aftermath	wiped out half...
g. completely flattened	90 per cent of the city's buildings
h. a second bomb annihilated	a further 80,000 in Nagasaki
i. essential to expedite	the end of World War II
j. mankind's most evil	acts of barbarity

GAP FILL:

60th anniversary of Hiroshima bombing

BNE: Japan **marks** the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima today. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and other world **dignitaries** will attend a memorial **service** in Hiroshima's Peace Park, close to the bomb's **epicenter**. The 70-minute long ceremony will include a water-blessing **ritual** dedicated to those who died **begging** and dying of thirst after the bomb fell. Survivors and **descendants** of those who died will also attend the service. Strangely, August 6 is not a holiday in Hiroshima. Neither will Hiroshima's people stop their activities at 8.15 AM, the time of the **detonation**, to reflect on the occasion.

The bomb was the first use of nuclear weapons on **civilians**. The blast and its **aftermath** wiped out half of Hiroshima's inhabitants in a **scorching** flash and completely flattened 90 per cent of the city's buildings and **infrastructure**. An estimated 140,000 people died instantly or in the following days. Three days later, a second bomb **annihilated** a further 80,000 in Nagasaki. There are 40,000 survivors of the bomb alive today, with an average age of 71. Many commentators believe the attacks were essential to **expedite** the end of World War II and avoid greater numbers being killed in a land **invasion** of Japan. Others consider them to be mankind's most evil acts of **barbarity**.