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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 20/02/13

Meteor hits earth in Russia

Recently a giant meteor streaked across the skies above Russia, breaking up as it entered the earth's atmosphere over western Siberia.

According to NASA, the US space agency, the 55 foot wide rock was said to have had a mass of 10,000 tonnes. It lit up the sky above the Urals region on Friday morning. The resulting explosion created a sonic boom that blew out windows and set off car alarms in the Russian city of Chelyabinsk.

More than 1,200 people were injured, mostly by flying glass caused by the windows shattering in more than 4,000 buildings. The event brought residents out onto the streets to see what was going on. Meteors of this size are said by scientists to hit the earth once every decade.

The drama in Russia developed hours before a 150ft-long asteroid whizzed safely past earth at the unusually close distance of 17,200 miles away from the planet. NASA scientists said the meteor hit with a force of 30 Hiroshima bombs. It entered the atmosphere at 44,000 miles per hour, taking 32.5 seconds to break up at an altitude of around 15 miles above the earth's surface.

A huge rescue and clean-up operation involving 24,000 people followed on the orders of the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russian officials put the damage at about 1bn roubles (US\$33m).

Part of the meteorite landed in a frozen lake in western Siberia. Visitors to Lake Chebarkul found a 26 ft wide hole in it as a result of the meteor hitting and sinking in it. Similar meteor strikes in Russia are actually rare. The most famous one devastated an area of more than 2,000 sq km (770 sq m) in Siberia in 1908.

SPEAKING

Think of three things you know about meteors and asteroids. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) How close to the earth was the large asteroid that passed the earth?
- 2) Name the president.
- 3) What happened in 1908?
- 4) Where did the meteorite land?
- 5) What is the cost of the damage done?

Student B questions

- 1) Name the country.
- 2) How many people were injured?
- 3) Name the city.
- 4) How long was the asteroid that narrowly missed the earth?
- 5) How wide was the rock?

Category: Meteor / Russia / Siberia
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

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WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with '**Meteors & asteroids**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

Meteor hits earth in Russia - *In pairs* choose three things from the article.

Write them below.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Add three similar ideas of your own. Discuss together.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs, think what you would do if a large asteroid was likely to hit earth? Separately write down three things you would do then discuss together. *One-two mins.*

The teacher will choose some students to read out their work to the class.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Have you ever seen a meteor storm?
- 3) Did you watch the meteor on TV?
- 4) Is the earth safe from objects from outer space?
- 5) How does this meteor strike compare with the one that wiped out the dinosaurs?
- 6) How rare are meteor strikes?
- 7) What's the difference between a meteor and an asteroid?
- 8) What would you do if you saw an asteroid coming towards you?
- 9) Should we be protecting ourselves from asteroids and meteors rather than fighting each other?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the BBC Technology TV studio. Today's interview is: *Meteor hits earth in Russia.* *10 mins.*

- 1) An ambulance man from Chelyabinsk
- 2) An astronomer
- 3) A Nasa expert
- 4) Someone who saw the meteor land in Lake Chebarkul in Siberia.

The teacher will choose some groups to role play their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. You are in a bar. Start a conversation about *the meteor streaking across the sky in Russia.* *5 mins.*

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 3

In pairs. Discuss the chances of the earth being hit with an asteroid the size of which killed off the dinosaurs. *5 mins.*

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

<i>Earth under attack from meteors and asteroids</i>
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The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Would you like to visit Russia?
- 3) Would you like to visit Lake Chebarkul in Western Siberia?
- 4) How do you think the city of Chelyabinsk coped with the number of injured people?
- 5) What are the odds on the earth being hit by an asteroid?
- 6) What unusual things have you seen in the sky?
- 7) What is the most frightening thing you have seen?
- 8) Will you be taking up astronomy after this lesson?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson in English for you to understand?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

Meteor hits earth in Russia – 20th February 2013

GAP FILL: READING

Meteor hits earth in Russia

Recently a giant (1)___ streaked across the skies above Russia, breaking up as it entered the earth's (2)___ over western Siberia.

According to NASA, the US space agency, the 55 foot wide rock was said to have had a (3)___ of 10,000 tonnes. It lit up the (4)___ above the Urals region on Friday morning. The resulting explosion created a (5)___ that blew out windows and set off car alarms in the Russian city of Chelyabinsk.

More than 1,200 people were injured, mostly by flying glass caused by the windows shattering in more than 4,000 buildings. The (6)___ brought residents out onto the streets to see what was going on. Meteors of this size are said by scientists to hit the (7)___ once every (8)___.

decade / sky / mass / earth / meteor / event / sonic boom / atmosphere

The (1)___ in Russia developed hours before a 150ft-long (2)___ whizzed safely past earth at the unusually close distance of 17,200 miles away from the planet. NASA scientists said the meteor hit with a (3)___ of 30 Hiroshima bombs. It entered the atmosphere at 44,000 miles per hour, taking 32.5 seconds to break up at an (4)___ of around 15 miles above the earth's surface.

A huge rescue and clean-up operation involving 24,000 people followed on the orders of the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russian officials put the (5)___ at about 1bn roubles (US\$33m).

Part of the meteorite landed in a frozen lake in western Siberia. Visitors to Lake Chebarkul found a 26 ft wide (6)___ in it as a result of the meteor hitting and sinking in it. (7)___ meteor strikes in Russia are actually (8)___. The most famous one devastated an area of more than 2,000 sq km (770 sq m) in Siberia in 1908.

similar / drama / altitude / hole / asteroid / force / rare / damage

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Meteor hits earth in Russia

Recently a giant meteor streaked across the skies (1)___ Russia, breaking up as it entered the earth's atmosphere (2)___ western Siberia.

According to NASA, the US space agency, the 55 foot wide rock was said to have had a mass of 10,000 tonnes. It lit up the sky above the Urals region on Friday morning. The resulting explosion created a sonic boom (3)___ blew out windows and set off car alarms in the Russian city of Chelyabinsk.

(4)___ than 1,200 people were injured, mostly by flying glass caused by the windows shattering in more (5)___ 4,000 buildings. The event brought residents out (6)___ the streets to see what was going on. Meteors of (7)___ size are said by scientists to hit the earth once (8)___ decade.

every / onto / that / over / more / this / than / above

The drama (1)___ Russia developed hours before a 150ft-long asteroid whizzed safely past earth (2)___ the unusually close distance of 17,200 miles away from the planet. NASA scientists said the meteor hit with (3)___ force of 30 Hiroshima bombs. (4)___ entered the atmosphere at 44,000 miles per hour, taking 32.5 seconds to break up at an altitude of around 15 miles above the earth's surface.

A huge rescue and clean-up operation involving 24,000 people followed (5)___ the orders of the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russian officials put (6)___ damage at about 1bn roubles (US\$33m).

Part of the meteorite landed in a frozen lake in western Siberia. Visitors to Lake Chebarkul found a 26 ft wide hole in it (7)___ a result of the meteor hitting and sinking in it. Similar meteor strikes in Russia are actually rare. The most famous one devastated (8)___ area of more than 2,000 sq km (770 sq m) in Siberia in 1908.

an / in / at / as / it / the / a / on

Meteor hits earth in Russia – 20th February 2013

GAP FILL: LISTENING

Meteor hits earth in Russia

Recently _____ streaked across the skies above Russia, breaking up as it entered the earth's atmosphere over western Siberia.

According to NASA, _____, the 55 foot wide rock was said to have had a mass of 10,000 tonnes. It lit up the sky above the Urals region on Friday morning. The _____ created a sonic boom that blew out windows and set off car alarms in the Russian city of Chelyabinsk.

More than 1,200 people were injured, mostly by flying glass caused by the _____ in more than 4,000 buildings. The event brought residents out onto the streets to see what was going on. Meteors of this size are said by scientists to hit the earth _____.

The drama in Russia developed hours before a 150ft-long asteroid whizzed safely past earth at the _____ of 17,200 miles away from the planet. NASA scientists said the meteor hit with a force of 30 Hiroshima bombs. It entered the atmosphere at 44,000 miles per hour, taking 32.5 seconds to break up at _____ 15 miles above the earth's surface.

A huge rescue and _____ involving 24,000 people followed on the orders of the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russian officials put the damage at about 1bn roubles (US\$33m).

Part of the meteorite landed _____ western Siberia. Visitors to Lake Chebarkul found a 26 ft wide hole in it as a result of the meteor hitting and sinking in it. _____ in Russia are actually rare. The most famous one devastated an area of more than 2,000 sq km (770 sq m) in Siberia in 1908.

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *In pairs*, write as many words about **Chelyabinsk** (a city in Russia) as you can! *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) The meteor _____
- 2) The asteroid _____
- 3) The drama _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Meteor hits earth in Russia**. Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) meteor
- 2) atmosphere
- 3) mass
- 4) sky
- 5) sonic boom
- 6) event
- 7) earth
- 8) decade

ANSWERS

- 1) drama
- 2) asteroid
- 3) force
- 4) altitude
- 5) damage
- 6) crater
- 7) similar
- 8) rare

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) meteor
- 2) sonic boom
- 3) explosion
- 4) atmosphere
- 5) Siberia
- 6) asteroid
- 7) brought
- 8) drama
- 9) operation
- 10) damage

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) crater
- 12) similar
- 13) rare
- 14) actually
- 15) whizzed
- 16) unusually
- 17) Hiroshima
- 18) decade
- 19) mass
- 20) altitude

Meteor hits earth in Russia – *20th February 2013*