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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 25/05/13

Oklahoma - After the tornado

Today, let's talk about the devastating tornado that recently hit Oklahoma in the USA. The town of Moore near Oklahoma City took a direct hit. Entire streets were reduced to rubble as the powerful storm hit - destroying everything in its path.

Stories have emerged of the bravery of those who tried to protect others from the tornado, including the teachers who protected their students from the storm as two schools took a direct hit. At the Plaza Towers Elementary School seven children were killed when the roof was ripped off and its walls were knocked down by the tornado as it passed through. At Briarwood Elementary school everyone amazingly survived the ordeal.

So far the tornado has cost 24 lives; more than 230 people were injured; 12,000 to 13,000 homes were destroyed or damaged. The twister created winds of at least 200mph (320km/h).

The National Weather Service (NWS) in the USA listed the tornado as an EF-5 – the most powerful type of tornado on the Fujita scale.

Hundreds of volunteers and federal officials assisted in the aftermath of the tornado, helping people find accommodation and delivering supplies including food to residents whose homes had been swept away. Disaster centres were set up to help people assess what they had lost and what their immediate needs were.

The question is – can the once thriving community of 56,000 in Moore rebuild their lives or will many simply decide to move away from Tornado Alley and rebuild their shattered lives elsewhere?

SPEAKING

Think of three things you know about tornados. What is a tornado? 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 many people lived in the town before the tornado?
- 2) What is an EF-5?
- 3) How many homes were destroyed?
- 4) There were hundreds of what?
- 5) What is Tornado Alley?

Student B questions

- 1) Name the town.
- 2) Which state was hit by what?
- 3) Name the schools.
- 4) How many people were killed?
- 5) How fast were the winds?

Category: USA / Oklahoma / Tornado
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 '**Tornados**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

Oklahoma - After the tornado - *In pairs* choose three things from the article.

Write them below.

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

Add three similar ideas of your own about the subject. 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 of three similar disasters that compare to the tornado in Oklahoma. Write them down. Talk about them. Which one was the worst? *Max 5 mins each!*

The teacher will choose some students to hear their discussion.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) How safe are your local schools from tornados?
- 3) Will Moore be rebuilt?
- 4) Have you ever helped in a disaster?
- 5) Name two similar disasters.
- 6) Does your town/city have an emergency warning system?
- 7) Have you seen the damage on the TV caused by the tornado in Oklahoma?
- 8) Will you be visiting Oklahoma this year?
- 9) How would you feel if your home was destroyed in a tornado?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the CNN studio in Atlanta. Today's interview is: 'Oklahoma – After the tornado'.

- 1) Someone who saw the tornado
- 2) The local mayor / other
- 3) A rescuer / other
- 4) The President of the USA

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

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. One of you is a resident of Moore in Oklahoma, USA. The other is a news reporter who will interview you about what you saw. (Imagine!) *5 mins.*

SPEAKING - GAME

Groups – 20 things you might see in Moore, Oklahoma, following the tornado. *5 mins.*

The teacher will choose some groups to hear their findings in front of the class.

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

Discuss the following...

- Tornados, how to protect yourself?
- Tornado shelters – good idea or not?

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Have you ever seen a real tornado?
- 3) Do you get tornados in your country?
- 4) Will Oklahoma State introduce new laws to build stronger tornado shelters in the future?
- 5) Do tornado shelters actually work?
- 6) Will many people simply move away from Moore, Oklahoma, and rebuild their shattered lives elsewhere?
- 7) What will the US government do to help the people of Moore?
- 8) Would you live in Tornado Alley?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson for you to understand?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

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GAP FILL: READING

Oklahoma - After the tornado

Today, let's talk about the devastating (1)___ that recently hit Oklahoma in the USA. The town of Moore near Oklahoma City took a direct hit. Entire streets were reduced to (2)___ as the powerful storm hit - destroying everything in its path.

Stories have emerged of the (3)___ of those who tried to (4)___ others from the tornado, including the teachers who protected their (5)___ from the storm as two schools took a direct hit. At the Plaza Towers Elementary School seven children were killed when the (6)___ was ripped off and its walls were knocked down by the tornado as it passed through. At Briarwood Elementary (7)___ everyone amazingly survived the (8)___.

bravery / tornado / ordeal / school / students / roof / rubble / protect

So far the tornado has cost 24 lives; more than 230 people were injured; 12,000 to 13,000 homes were destroyed or damaged. The (1)___ created winds of at least 200mph (320km/h).

The National Weather Service (NWS) in the USA listed the tornado as an EF-5 – the most (2)___ type of tornado on the Fujita scale.

Hundreds of (3)___ and federal officials assisted in the (4)___ of the tornado, helping people find accommodation and delivering supplies including food to residents whose homes had been swept away. Disaster centres were set up to (5)___ people assess what they had lost and what their (6)___ needs were.

The question is – can the once thriving (7)___ of 56,000 in Moore rebuild their lives or will many simply decide to move away from Tornado Alley and (8)___ their shattered lives elsewhere?

community / volunteers / twister / aftermath / rebuild / powerful / immediate / help

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Oklahoma - After the tornado

Today, let's talk about the devastating tornado that recently hit Oklahoma in (1)___ USA. The town of Moore near Oklahoma City took a direct hit. Entire streets were reduced to rubble as the powerful storm hit - destroying everything (2)___ its path.

Stories have emerged of the bravery (3)___ those who tried to protect others from the tornado, including the teachers who protected their students from the storm (4)___ two schools took (5)___ direct hit. (6)___ the Plaza Towers Elementary School seven children were killed when the roof was ripped off and its walls were knocked down (7)___ the tornado as (8)___ passed through. At Briarwood Elementary school everyone amazingly survived the ordeal.

it / as / in / of / at / by / a / the

So far the tornado has cost 24 lives; (1)___ than 230 people were injured; 12,000 to 13,000 homes were destroyed or damaged. The twister created winds of at least 200mph (320km/h).

The National Weather Service (NWS) in the USA listed the tornado as an EF-5 – the (2)___ powerful type of tornado on the Fujita scale.

Hundreds of volunteers and federal officials assisted in the aftermath of the tornado, helping people find accommodation and delivering supplies including food to residents (3)___ homes had been swept away. Disaster centres were set up to help people assess what (4)___ had lost and (5)___ their immediate needs were.

The question is – can the once thriving community of 56,000 in Moore rebuild their lives or will (6)___ simply decide to move away (7)___ Tornado Alley and rebuild (8)___ shattered lives elsewhere?

their / many / most / whose / from / what / they / more

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GAP FILL: LISTENING

Oklahoma - After the tornado

Today, let's talk about the _____ that recently hit Oklahoma in the USA. The town of Moore near Oklahoma City took a direct hit. Entire streets were reduced to rubble as the _____ - destroying everything in its path.

Stories have emerged of the bravery of those who tried to _____ the tornado, including the teachers who protected their students from the storm as two schools took a direct hit. At the Plaza Towers Elementary School seven children were killed when _____ off and its walls were knocked down by the tornado as it passed through. At Briarwood Elementary school everyone amazingly _____.

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The question is – can the once _____ of 56,000 in Moore rebuild their lives or will many simply decide to move away from Tornado Alley and rebuild their _____?

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *In pairs/small groups* – list five things you know about **Oklahoma**. Talk about each of them. *5 mins*.

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

- 1) Oklahoma _____
- 2) The town of Moore _____
- 3) The tornado _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Oklahoma – After the tornado**. Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) Tornado
- 2) Rubble
- 3) Bravery
- 4) Protect
- 5) Students
- 6) Roof
- 7) School
- 8) ordeal

SPELLING

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

- 1) Oklahoma
- 2) tornado
- 3) bravery
- 4) powerful
- 5) recently
- 6) rubble
- 7) everything
- 8) those
- 9) protect
- 10) elementary

ANSWERS

- 1) twister
- 2) powerful
- 3) volunteers
- 4) aftermath
- 5) help
- 6) immediate
- 7) community
- 8) rebuild

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) through
- 12) everyone
- 13) twister
- 14) volunteers
- 15) officials
- 16) aftermath
- 17) accommodation
- 18) residents
- 19) assess
- 20) community

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