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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 15/06/17

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire? It's a hot topic, following the dreadful news story about the recent London tower block fire at the Grenfell Tower, in White City, London.

How could the fire have happened? Apparently, it was a faulty fridge, in a fourth floor flat of the building that caused the terrible fire. It spread rapidly, mainly because of non-fireproof cladding that had recently been fixed to the outside of the building.

So, if you work in a high rise office, or live in a high rise tower block – just how safe are you in it? Safety standards seem to vary in each country. Are there regular fire drills in your tower block? Do the occupants assemble a safe distance away from the building?

Are there enough emergency staircases built in a typical high rise/tower block/panel flats or office block? Is there a sprinkler system installed? If not, why not? Is the local council or private landlord being negligent in the upkeep of the building?

Are there fire extinguishers on every landing? Is there a helicopter-pad on the roof for evacuation? Can the firefighter's ladder reach your floor? Is there a working fire alarm in every flat or on every floor? Are there sufficient water tanks on the roof? Is the building regularly inspected for these issues, and other common sense safety features, by the local fire service?

Are other nearby tower blocks, with similar cladding that has been fixed on them, potential death traps? Who really knows whether a building was fitted with polystyrene non-fireproof cladding or fireproof polystyrene cladding? Did the money saved go into the developer's or builder's pocket, perhaps? **Cont.../**

SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you know about the tragic recent Grenfell Tower fire in London. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LESSON NOTE FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS

In this lesson, you need to imagine you either live or work in a tower block, or both.

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) Where is White City?
- 2) What is a fire extinguisher?
- 3) What is a hot topic?
- 4) What do we mean by evacuation?
- 5) What is a sprinkler system?

Student B questions

- 1) What is polystyrene cladding?
- 2) What does the term 'go into the builder's pocket' mean?
- 3) What is a firefighter's ladder?
- 4) What is a fire drill?
- 5) What is a fire service inspection?

Cont/ High rise flats and offices today demand premium prices for the view. But would you, now, really want to pay silly money, to live in, or work in a potential death trap? The higher the level, the better the view – right? The tragedy in London might now force developers to cease building so high. Then again, it might not.

Category: UK / London / Tower and Office Blocks
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire? – 15th June 2017

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can about '**Fire safety in tower blocks**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 1

In pairs – Go through the fire drill your company or school undertakes. Where do you meet? Why? What is involved? *3 mins.*

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?
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DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) How safe is the tower block, you or your friends might live in, or work in, if there is a fire?
- 3) Just how safe are you working or living in a tower block?
- 4) Why are the fire safety standards for tower blocks different in every country?
- 5) Are there regular fire drills in your tower block?
- 6) If there is a fire drill, do the occupants of tower blocks, or workers in tower blocks, assemble a safe distance away from the building?
- 7) How many emergency staircases are there in the tower block you live/work in? Are the fire doors locked?
- 8) Would you buy a flat on a higher level, simply for a nice view? If yes, talk about the fire safety issues involved.
- 9) Is your the local council or landlord of your tower block negligent in the upkeep of the building?
- 10) Did any money from any tower block reconstruction project go into the pockets of the builder or developer, rather than the project itself?
- 11) Have you learnt anything today?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 2

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio in London. Today's interview is about: *How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?*

- 1) An angry resident of White City in London.
- 2) Someone who saw the terrible fire at the Grenfell Tower in London.
- 3) Someone who works in a high rise tower.
- 4) Someone who lives in a newly renovated tower block.

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

Note: You have to imagine in the discussion below that you either live or work in a tower block, or both.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) How safe is your office, if there is a fire in your tower block?
- 2) Are there fire extinguishers in every flat or on every landing of every floor in your tower block?
- 3) Is there a helicopter pad on the roof of your tower block for evacuation purposes?
- 4) Are there sufficient water tanks on the roof of your tower block?
- 5) Is there a swimming pool on the roof of your tower block?
- 6) Did anyone see the movie *The Towering Inferno*? If yes, talk about it. How did it end?
- 7) Is the tower block regularly inspected by the fire authorities?
- 8) Is your tower block or high rise office covered with fireproof polystyrene cladding?
- 9) Are any nearby tower blocks potential death traps, i.e. do they have non-fireproof cladding on them?
- 10) Do you know whether a tower block, or any other building, you know of, has been fitted with non-fireproof, or fireproof polystyrene cladding?
- 11) Is a sprinkler system installed in your tower block? Why? Why not?
- 12) Did you like this discussion?

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire? – 15th June 2017

GAP FILL: READING

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire? It's a hot (1)__, following the dreadful news story about the recent London tower block fire at the Grenfell Tower, in White City, London.

How could the fire have happened? Apparently, it was a (2)__ fridge, in a fourth floor flat of the building that caused the (3)__ fire. It spread rapidly, mainly because of non-fireproof (4)__ that had recently been fixed to the outside of the building.

So, if you work in a high rise office, or live in a high rise tower block – just how safe are you in it? Safety standards seem to vary in each country. Are there (5)__ (6)__ in your tower block? Do the (7)__ (8)__ a safe distance away from the building?

faulty / cladding / assemble / regular / terrible / fire drills / occupants / topic

Are there enough emergency staircases built in a typical high rise/tower block/panel flats or office block? Is there a (1)__ system installed? If not, why not? Is the local council or private landlord being (2)__ in the upkeep of the building?

Are there fire extinguishers on every landing? Is there a helicopter-pad on the roof for evacuation? Can the (3)__'s ladder reach your floor? Is there a working fire alarm in every flat or on every floor? Are there (4)__ water tanks on the roof? Is the building regularly inspected for these (5)__, and other common sense safety features, by the local fire service?

Are other nearby tower blocks, with (6)__ cladding that has been fixed on them, potential death traps? Who really knows whether a building was fitted with (7)__ non-fireproof cladding or fireproof polystyrene cladding? Did the money saved go into the developer's or builder's (8)__, perhaps?

pocket / sprinkler / polystyrene / firefighter / negligent / sufficient / similar / issues

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?

(1)__ safe is (2)__ office or tower block, if there is a fire? It's a hot topic, following the dreadful news story about the recent London tower block fire at the Grenfell Tower, in White City, London.

How (3)__ the fire have happened? Apparently, it was a faulty fridge, in a fourth floor flat of the building that caused the terrible fire. It spread rapidly, mainly (4)__ of non-fireproof cladding (5)__ had recently been fixed to the outside of the building.

(6)__, if (7)__ work in a high rise office, or live in a high rise tower block – (8)__ how safe are you in it? Safety standards seem to vary in each country. Are there regular fire drills in your tower block? Do the occupants assemble a safe distance away from the building?

just / because / your / that / could / how / you / so

Are there enough emergency staircases built (1)__ a typical high rise/tower block/panel flats or office block? Is there a sprinkler system installed? (2)__ not, why not? Is the local council or private landlord being negligent in the upkeep (3)__ the building?

Are there fire extinguishers on every landing? Is there a helicopter-pad on the roof for evacuation? (4)__ the firefighter's ladder reach your floor? Is there a working fire alarm in every flat (5)__ on every floor? Are there sufficient water tanks on the roof? Is the building regularly inspected for these issues, and other common sense safety features, (6)__ the local fire service?

Are other nearby tower blocks, with similar cladding that has been fixed (7)__ them, potential death traps? (8)__ really knows whether a building was fitted with polystyrene non-fireproof cladding or fireproof polystyrene cladding? Did the money saved go into the developer's or builder's pocket, perhaps?

or / on / in / of / if / by / can / who

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire? – 15th June 2017



GAP FILL: LISTENING

WRITING/SPELLING

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?

How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire? It's a hot topic, following the _____ about the recent London tower block fire at the Grenfell Tower, in White City, London.

How could the fire have happened? Apparently, it was a faulty fridge, _____ of the building that caused the terrible fire. _____, mainly because of non-fireproof cladding that had recently been fixed to the outside of the building.

So, if you work in a high rise office, or live in a high rise tower block – just how safe are you in it? Safety standards seem to _____. Are there regular fire drills in your tower block? Do the occupants assemble a safe distance away from the building?

Are there enough _____ built in a typical high rise/tower block/panel flats or office block? Is there a sprinkler system installed? If not, why not? Is the local council _____ being negligent in the upkeep of the building?

Are there _____ on every landing? Is there a helicopter-pad on the roof for evacuation? Can the _____ reach your floor? Is there a working fire alarm in every flat or on every floor? Are there sufficient water tanks on the roof? Is the building _____ for these issues, and other common sense safety features, by the local fire service?

Are other nearby tower blocks, with similar cladding that has been fixed on them, potential death traps? Who really knows whether a building was fitted with polystyrene non-fireproof cladding or fireproof _____? Did the money saved go into the developer's or builder's pocket, perhaps?

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WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *In pairs/As a class*, list 5 different safety issues associated with high rise flats and 5 more safety issues, associated with high office blocks. Are the issues similar? Talk briefly about each of them. *Five minutes.*

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

- 1) The tower blocks _____
- 2) I think _____
- 3) Office blocks _____

3) Write down 50 words about: *How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?* Your words can be read out in class.

4) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: ***How safe is your office or tower block, if there is a fire?***

SPELLING

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

- 1) standards
- 2) safety
- 3) sprinkler
- 4) emergency
- 5) assemble
- 6) occupants
- 7) apparently
- 8) negligent
- 9) upkeep
- 10) extinguisher

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

- Pass = 12**
- Good = 15**
- Very good = 18**
- Excellent = 20**

- 11) evacuation
- 12) sufficient
- 13) regularly
- 14) ladder
- 15) reach
- 16) common
- 17) cladding
- 18) polystyrene
- 19) pocket
- 20) dreadful