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Shocking state of world's toilets

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20 November, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Shocking state of world's toilets

The British charity WaterAid has published a shocking report claiming that 40 percent of the world's population - 2.6 billion people - suffers from easily preventable fatal diseases because of a lack of basic sanitation. This revelation coincides with World Toilet Day, which is held every year on November 19 to increase awareness of the importance to health and survival of hygienic toilets. The report names and shames over 35 countries in which toilet facilities are a basic health hazard and need improving or where whole communities are without access to a decent lavatory. WaterAid hopes to bring to fruition the United Nations Millennium Development Goal for Sanitation, which is to halve the number of people without access to toilets or sanitation by 2015.

WaterAid's compilation of sanitation-deprived countries is topped by India, where 772 million have to squat in fields or along roadsides to go about their daily business. Ethiopia has the lowest proportion of toilets per capita – just six percent of Ethiopians have access to a loo. Surprising entrants on WaterAid's list are Romania, which is vying for EU entry in 2007, Russia, Turkey and Brazil. WaterAid says: "Lack of adequate sanitation is not just a problem of convenience, it is also a major health hazard." The organization points to a cut in global funding on sanitation, saying: "Aid donors do not prioritize sanitation for spending in today's developing countries, despite sanitation having played a major role in reducing mortality in their own countries."

Source: <http://www.wateraid.org.uk/documents/StateOfWorldToilets.pdf>

WARM-UPS

1. TOILET SEARCH: Find out as much information as you can on toilets – their history, design, strange facts, etc. Talk to many other students. After you have finished, sit with your partner(s) and exchange information. What did you find out that most surprised you? Did you hear anything you wish you hadn't?

2. TOILET SURVEY: In pairs / groups, talk about your opinion of the toilets in the following places. After you have finished, share what you heard with other students.

- My house
- My school
- My workplace
- The local train station
- McDonald's (or other fast food eatery)
- A friend's house
- In another country
- Public toilet in the street

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

Charities / water / aid / shocking reports / toilets / preventable diseases / health / hygiene / health hazards / India / Ethiopia / global funding / mortality rates

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

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

5. TOILET STORIES: Most people have a toilet story – a "best", "worst", "dirtiest", etc. story. Talk to your partner(s) about your favorite toilet (horror) story. Change partners and swap stories.

6. TOILET OPINIONS: Do you agree with these opinions on toilets? Talk about them with your partner(s).

- a. Toilets are strange inventions.
- b. Toilets are too dirty to be inside a house.
- c. If toilets had Internet access, more would get done in the world.
- d. The toilet should not be in the same room as the bath or shower.
- e. I hate it when the toilet paper runs out.
- f. Toilet seats are cleaner than kitchen chopping boards.
- g. The toilet is the perfect place to relax.
- h. Women need more toilets in public places.
- i. The world should increase spending on toilets for poor people.
- j. People spend too long going to the toilet.
- k. Some people still need training in how to use a toilet.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. A survey reports the wallpaper in most world toilets is badly designed. T / F
- b. Dirty or non-existent toilets cause many preventable fatal diseases. T / F
- c. November 19 is World Toilet Day. T / F
- d. The UN hopes to provide toilets for all by 2015. T / F
- e. China is top of the list of countries with the poorest sanitation. T / F
- f. No European country was found to be lacking adequate sanitation. T / F
- g. There has been a cut in global funding on sanitation. T / F
- h. Improved sanitation has decreased mortality rates in donor countries. T / F

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

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. preventable | crouch |
| b. sanitation | humiliates |
| c. revelation | death |
| d. shames | list |
| e. fruition | news |
| f. compilation | indicates |
| g. squat | avoidable |
| h. vying | completion |
| i. points to | striving |
| j. mortality | cleanliness |

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. suffers from easily preventable | and shames over 35 countries |
| b. The report names | to fruition... |
| c. toilet facilities are a basic | of toilets per capita |
| d. WaterAid hopes to bring | fatal diseases |
| e. halve the number of people | health hazard |
| f. 772 million have to squat | just a problem of convenience |
| g. Ethiopia has the lowest proportion | in reducing mortality |
| h. vying for | without access to toilets |
| i. Lack of adequate sanitation is not | EU entry in 2007 |
| j. having played a major role | in fields or along roadsides |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Shocking state of world's toilets

The British charity WaterAid has published a shocking report _____ that 40 percent of the world's population - 2.6 billion people - _____ from easily preventable _____ diseases because of a lack of basic sanitation. This revelation coincides with World Toilet Day, which is held every year on November 19 to increase awareness of the importance to health and survival of _____ toilets. The report names and _____ over 35 countries in which toilet facilities are a basic health hazard and need improving or where whole communities are without access to a _____ lavatory. WaterAid hopes to bring to _____ the United Nations Millennium Development Goal for Sanitation, which is to _____ the number of people without access to toilets or sanitation by 2015.

WaterAid's compilation of sanitation-_____ countries is topped by India, where 772 million have to _____ in fields or along roadsides to go about their daily _____. Ethiopia has the lowest proportion of toilets per capita – just six percent of Ethiopians have access to a _____. Surprising entrants on WaterAid's list are Romania, which is vying for EU entry in 2007, Russia, Turkey and Brazil. WaterAid says: "Lack of adequate sanitation is not just a problem of convenience, it is also a _____ health hazard." The organization points to a cut in global funding on sanitation, saying: "Aid _____ do not _____ sanitation for spending in today's developing countries, despite sanitation having played a major _____ in reducing mortality in their own countries."

shames

fatal

fruition

hygienic

claiming

halve

decent

suffers

major

squat

role

loo

donors

deprived

prioritize

business

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Shocking state of world's toilets

The British charity WaterAid has published a shocking report _____ that 40 percent of the world's population - 2.6 billion people - suffers from easily preventable _____ diseases because of a lack of basic sanitation. This revelation _____ with World Toilet Day, which is held every year on November 19 to increase awareness of the importance to health and survival of _____ toilets. The report names and shames over 35 countries in which toilet facilities are a basic health _____ and need improving or where whole communities are without access to a _____ lavatory. WaterAid hopes to bring to fruition the United Nations Millennium Development Goal for Sanitation, which is to _____ the number of people without access to toilets or sanitation by 2015.

WaterAid's compilation of sanitation-_____ countries is topped by India, where 772 million have to _____ in fields or along roadsides to go about their daily business. Ethiopia has the lowest proportion of toilets _____ - just six percent of Ethiopians have access to a loo. Surprising entrants on WaterAid's list are Romania, which is _____ for EU entry in 2007, Russia, Turkey and Brazil. WaterAid says: "Lack of _____ sanitation is not just a problem of convenience, it is also a major health hazard." The organization points to a cut in global funding on sanitation, saying: "Aid donors do not _____ sanitation for spending in today's developing countries, despite sanitation having played a major role in reducing mortality in their own countries."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 "TOILETS" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about toilets and hygiene.

- 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:

- shocking
- fatal
- awareness
- improving
- fruition
- halve
- compilation
- squat
- loo
- vying
- convenience
- spending

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What did you expect to read about when you saw the title?
- c. Do you think toilets are an interesting topic of conversation?
- d. What do you think of the fact that 40 percent of the world has no access to toilets?
- e. What do you think people should do on World Toilet Day?
- f. What would happen if all of the toilets in your country suddenly broke?
- g. Do you think the report should "name and shame" countries that don't do enough to help poor countries with sanitation needs?
- h. Are you surprised Romania, Russia, Turkey and Brazil are on the list compiled by WaterAid?
- i. Toilets in homes in developed countries will soon diagnose your health before you flush. What do you think of this?
- j. Should poor countries spend money on toilets and sanitation or better hospitals?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. How important a priority is providing toilets to those without them?
- d. Have you ever been to any particularly dirty toilets?
- e. Are you fussy about the kinds of toilets you use?
- f. Do you have any toilet "rituals"?
- g. When was the last time you were dying to go to the toilet?
- h. Why are buildings and restaurants always built with too few ladies' toilets?
- i. What do you think of the euphemisms "go to powder one's nose" and "visit the little boy's room" for going to the toilet?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

DESIGNER TOILET: You have won a competition for a toilet design company to build you the toilet of your dreams. You must agree on the design and features and functions with your partner(s) – you share the same house and toilet.

	YOUR IDEAS
Shape	
Size of toilet room	
In-toilet entertainment	
Hi-tech features	
Color scheme	
Flooring and wall covering	
Other	

- Change partners and show your design ideas to other students.
- Give each other feedback on the ideas.
- Discuss how likely it is your ideas might one day come to fruition.

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 World Toilet Day. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. WORLD TOILETS: Create a plan for how your country (government, NGOs and general public) can help increase the sanitation and number of toilets in a poorer country. Explain what you wrote to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. FUTURE TOILET: Make designs for the toilet of the future. Explain all of the features and functions. Show your designs to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all think of similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. preventable | avoidable |
| b. sanitation | cleanliness |
| c. revelation | news |
| d. shames | humiliates |
| e. fruition | completion |
| f. compilation | list |
| g. squat | crouch |
| h. vying | striving |
| i. points to | indicates |
| j. mortality | death |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. suffers from easily preventable | fatal diseases |
| b. The report names | and shames over 35 countries |
| c. toilet facilities are a basic | health hazard |
| d. WaterAid hopes to bring | to fruition... |
| e. halve the number of people | without access to toilets |
| f. 772 million have to squat | in fields or along roadsides |
| g. Ethiopia has the lowest proportion | of toilets per capita |
| h. vying for | EU entry in 2007 |
| i. Lack of adequate sanitation is not | just a problem of convenience |
| j. having played a major role | in reducing mortality |

GAP FILL:

Shocking state of world's toilets

The British charity WaterAid has published a shocking report **claiming** that 40 percent of the world's population - 2.6 billion people - **suffers** from easily preventable **fatal** diseases because of a lack of basic sanitation. This revelation coincides with World Toilet Day, which is held every year on November 19 to increase awareness of the importance to health and survival of **hygienic** toilets. The report names and **shames** over 35 countries in which toilet facilities are a basic health hazard and need improving or where whole communities are without access to a **decent** lavatory. WaterAid hopes to bring to **fruition** the United Nations Millennium Development Goal for Sanitation, which is to **halve** the number of people without access to toilets or sanitation by 2015.

WaterAid's compilation of sanitation-**deprived** countries is topped by India, where 772 million have to **squat** in fields or along roadsides to go about their daily **business**. Ethiopia has the lowest proportion of toilets per capita – just six percent of Ethiopians have access to a **loo**. Surprising entrants on WaterAid's list are Romania, which is vying for EU entry in 2007, Russia, Turkey and Brazil. WaterAid says: "Lack of adequate sanitation is not just a problem of convenience, it is also a **major** health hazard." The organization points to a cut in global funding on sanitation, saying: "Aid **donors** do not **prioritize** sanitation for spending in today's developing countries, despite sanitation having played a major **role** in reducing mortality in their own countries."