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New law to ban iPods on NY streets

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10th February, 2007

THE ARTICLE

New law to ban iPods on NY streets

Listening to an iPod while walking across the street could soon become illegal in New York. State Senator Carl Kruger wants a law introduced that outlaws crossing roads while listening to music, talking on a mobile phone or using video games and personal organizers. The fine for breaking this law could be as much as \$100. The Senator said he has witnessed too many near misses whereby pedestrians have not heard or seen oncoming traffic because they were too involved in gaming, chatting on their phone or what he describes as being "lost in iPod oblivion". Mr. Kruger told reporters: "Government has an obligation to protect its citizens. This electronic gadgetry is reaching the point where it's...creating an atmosphere where we have a major public safety crisis at hand." He is concerned that it's becoming a nationwide problem.

Kruger may have a point. Three pedestrians have been killed in the past four months in New York's Brooklyn district. They all walked into busy traffic because they were distracted by an electronic device of some sort. In one case, bystanders shouted at someone to be careful seconds before they were knocked down and became another traffic accident statistic. Despite the alarming increase in deaths caused by distractions from iPods etc, New Yorkers are likely to ignore any new law forbidding their use in the streets. Many residents believe Kruger is going too far and that the law treats people as though they had no sense. Brooklyn resident Mary Alberto was outraged at Kruger's proposal. She said: "Enough is enough. I have been able to cross the street since I was eight." She also joked that one day people might be fined for not looking both ways.

WARM-UPS

1. CROSSING THE STREET: With your partner(s), talk about the dangers of crossing the street and any near misses you have had. Change partners and share your information.

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

iPod / crossing busy roads / near misses / oblivion / gadgets / public safety / pedestrians / New York / traffic accidents / statistics / distractions / outrage

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

3. GADGET DANGERS: With your partner(s), write down a list of dangers of iPods, mobile phones and video game players. Decide what governments should do about these dangers. Change partners and share your information.

4. STREET LAWS: With your partner(s), talk about these possible new laws that might change things in your streets. Rate them: 10 is much needed, 1 is not needed at all. Decide on how much fines should be if people break these laws.

- no listening to music players
- no smoking
- only crossing the street at a walk sign
- no eating while walking
- other _____
- no talking to other people
- no stopping
- no bicycles
- special lane for the aged

5. QUICK DEBATE: Students A believe it should be illegal to use music players and mobile phones while crossing the street. Students B believe it is ridiculous to make it illegal to use music players and mobile phones while crossing the street. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

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

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. It is now illegal to use music players in New York streets. | T / F |
| b. There is a fine for people who listen to music while crossing a road. | T / F |
| c. A US senator has seen many near misses on New York's streets. | T / F |
| d. The senator said there is now a public safety crisis in America. | T / F |
| e. Three people died on roads because they were using gadgets. | T / F |
| f. One person died because he could not hear a shouted warning. | T / F |
| g. Most New Yorkers want the new law to be passed. | T / F |
| h. Another new law may fine people for not looking both ways. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| a. outlaws | close shaves |
| b. fine | unconsciousness |
| c. near misses | disturbing |
| d. oblivion | preoccupied |
| e. obligation | onlookers |
| f. distracted | bans |
| g. device | duty |
| h. bystanders | furious |
| i. alarming | penalty |
| j. outraged | gadget |

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

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| a. Listening to an iPod while | many near misses |
| b. The fine for breaking this law could | looking both ways |
| c. he has witnessed too | have a point |
| d. pedestrians have not heard or seen | be as much as \$100 |
| e. Government has an obligation | some sort |
| f. Kruger may | to protect its citizens |
| g. an electronic device of | too far |
| h. another traffic accident | walking across the street |
| i. residents believe Kruger is going | oncoming traffic |
| j. fined for not | statistic |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

New law to ban iPods on NY streets

Listening to an iPod while walking across the street could soon become illegal in New York. State Senator Carl Kruger wants a law introduced that _____ crossing roads while listening to music, talking on a mobile phone or using video games and personal organizers. The _____ for breaking this law could be as much as \$100. The Senator said he has witnessed too many near _____ whereby pedestrians have not heard or seen _____ traffic because they were too _____ in gaming, chatting on their phone or what he describes as being "lost in iPod _____". Mr. Kruger told reporters: "Government has an _____ to protect its citizens. This electronic gadgetry is reaching the point where it's...creating an atmosphere where we have a major public safety crisis at _____." He is concerned that it's becoming a nationwide problem.

Kruger may have a _____. Three pedestrians have been killed in the past four months in New York's Brooklyn district. They all walked into busy traffic because they were distracted by an electronic device of some _____. In one case, _____ shouted at someone to be careful seconds before they were knocked down and became another traffic accident _____. Despite the alarming increase in deaths caused by distractions from iPods etc, New Yorkers are likely to _____ any new law forbidding their use in the streets. Many residents believe Kruger is going too _____ and that the law treats people as though they had no sense. Brooklyn resident Mary Alberto was _____ at Kruger's proposal. She said: "Enough is _____. I have been able to cross the street since I was eight." She also joked that one day people might be fined for not looking both ways.

fine
hand
involved
misses
oblivion
outlaws
oncoming
obligation
bystanders
outraged
sort
ignore
point
enough
statistic
far

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

New law to ban iPods on NY streets

Listening to an iPod _____ the street could soon become illegal in New York. State Senator Carl Kruger wants a law introduced _____ roads while listening to music, talking on a mobile phone or using video games and personal organizers. The fine for breaking this law could _____ \$100. The Senator said he has witnessed too many near misses whereby pedestrians have not heard or seen oncoming traffic because they were too involved in gaming, chatting on their phone or _____ being "lost in iPod oblivion". Mr. Kruger told reporters: "Government has an obligation to protect its citizens. This electronic gadgetry is _____ it's...creating an atmosphere where we have a major _____." He is concerned that it's becoming a nationwide problem.

Kruger may have a point. Three _____ killed in the past four months in New York's Brooklyn district. They all walked into busy traffic because they were distracted by an electronic _____. In one case, bystanders shouted at someone to be careful seconds before they were knocked down and became _____. Despite the alarming increase in deaths caused by distractions from iPods etc, New Yorkers are likely to ignore any new law _____ the streets. Many residents believe Kruger is going too far and that the law treats people as though they had no sense. Brooklyn resident Mary Alberto was outraged at Kruger's proposal. She said: "Enough is enough. I _____ the street since I was eight." She also joked that one day people might be fined for not looking both ways.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 activity. 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 "STREET CROSSING" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the dangers of crossing the street or proper public behaviour in the streets.

- 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:

- while
- outlaws
- witnessed
- lost
- atmosphere
- hand
- district
- distracted
- statistic
- despite
- outraged
- both ways

DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Do you think this is an interesting story?
- c) What do you think about the law the senator wants to introduce?
- d) What do you do while you walk in the street and cross roads?
- e) What would your life be like without your gadgets?
- f) Do you get annoyed when you hear music from other people's music players or listen to their mobile phone conversations?
- g) Have you had any near misses while crossing the road?
- h) Are you ever in "iPod oblivion" – where you are lost to the world because you are listening to your music?
- i) Are there any other dangers of music players and mobile phones?
- j) Do you think a \$100 fine is too much?



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) Do you think banning music players in public should become international law?
- d) What dangers are there crossing streets in your town?
- e) Do you think senator Kruger has a point?
- f) Do you think music players and mobile phones are anti-social?
- g) Do you think street-crossing laws should be tougher?
- h) Do you think governments have a responsibility to protect pedestrians?
- i) Is there a public safety crisis on the streets in your country?
- 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

GADGET DANGERS:

With your partner(s), create three new laws to protect people against these gadgets.

	Laws
Music players	1. 2. 3.
Mobile phones	1. 2. 3.
Personal organizers	1. 2. 3.
Portable video games	1. 2. 3.

Present your laws to the class / other teams.

Discuss whether your laws would work in your country.

Vote on the best law for each gadget.

Write a letter to your government. Describe your law and why it is necessary.

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

New law to ban iPods on NY streets

Listening to an iPod (1) _____ walking across the street could soon become illegal in New York. State Senator Carl Kruger wants a law (2) _____ that outlaws crossing roads while listening to music, talking on a mobile phone or using video games and personal organizers. The fine for (3) _____ this law could be as much as \$100. The Senator said he has witnessed too many near misses whereby pedestrians have not heard or seen (4) _____ traffic because they were too involved in gaming, chatting on their phone or what he describes as being "lost in iPod oblivion". Mr. Kruger told reporters: "Government has an obligation (5) _____ protect its citizens. This electronic gadgetry is reaching the point where it's...creating an atmosphere where we have a major public safety crisis at (6) _____." He is concerned that it's becoming a nationwide problem.

Kruger may have a (7) _____. Three pedestrians have been killed in the past four months in New York's Brooklyn district. They all walked into busy traffic because they were distracted by an electronic device of some (8) _____. In one case, bystanders shouted at someone to be careful seconds before they were knocked down and became another traffic accident (9) _____. Despite the alarming increase in deaths caused by distractions from iPods etc, New Yorkers are (10) _____ to ignore any new law forbidding their use in the streets. Many residents believe Kruger is going too far and that the law treats people as (11) _____ they had no sense. Brooklyn resident Mary Alberto was outraged at Kruger's proposal. She said: "Enough is (12) _____. I have been able to cross the street since I was eight." She also joked that one day people might be fined for not looking both ways.

1. (a) awhile (b) while (c) during (d) amid
2. (a) introduction (b) introduce (c) introduced (d) intro
3. (a) breaking (b) breaks (c) broke (d) broken
4. (a) becoming (b) upcoming (c) incoming (d) oncoming
5. (a) to (b) for (c) at (d) in
6. (a) hand (b) head (c) leg (d) foot
7. (a) points (b) point (c) pointer (d) pointing
8. (a) shorten (b) sorting (c) short (d) sort
9. (a) statistical (b) statistic (c) statistics (d) stats
10. (a) likelihood (b) likes (c) likely (d) liken
11. (a) though (b) because (c) however (d) even
12. (a) more (b) plenty (c) enough (d) many

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 about laws for pedestrians in different countries. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. POSTER: Make a poster about street etiquette and pedestrian safety. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Vote on who made the best poster.

4. GADGET SAFETY: Write a safety sheet for a gadget (iPod, mobile phone, etc). Describe the advantages and disadvantages of the gadget. Include a section on how, when and where to use it safely. In your next lesson, talk about your safety sheets with your partner(s).

5. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE: Write a newspaper article about the problems of walking in the streets and crossing the roads of your town. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

6. LETTER: Write a letter to a politician who wants to introduce a fine for people who cross the road while listening to a music player or using a mobile phone. Ask him/her three questions. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| a. outlaws | bans |
| b. fine | penalty |
| c. near misses | close shaves |
| d. oblivion | unconsciousness |
| e. obligation | duty |
| f. distracted | preoccupied |
| g. device | gadget |
| h. bystanders | onlookers |
| i. alarming | disturbing |
| j. outraged | furious |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| a. Listening to an iPod while | walking across the street |
| b. The fine for breaking this law could | be as much as \$100 |
| c. he has witnessed too | many near misses |
| d. pedestrians have not heard or seen | oncoming traffic |
| e. Government has an obligation | to protect its citizens |
| f. Kruger may | have a point |
| g. an electronic device of | some sort |
| h. another traffic accident | statistic |
| i. residents believe Kruger is going | too far |
| j. fined for not | looking both ways |

GAP FILL:

New law to ban iPods on NY streets

Listening to an iPod while walking across the street could soon become illegal in New York. State Senator Carl Kruger wants a law introduced that **outlaws** crossing roads while listening to music, talking on a mobile phone or using video games and personal organizers. The **fine** for breaking this law could be as much as \$100. The Senator said he has witnessed too many near **misses** whereby pedestrians have not heard or seen **oncoming** traffic because they were too **involved** in gaming, chatting on their phone or what he describes as being "lost in iPod **oblivion**". Mr. Kruger told reporters: "Government has an **obligation** to protect its citizens. This electronic gadgetry is reaching the point where it's...creating an atmosphere where we have a major public safety crisis at **hand**." He is concerned that it's becoming a nationwide problem.

Kruger may have a **point**. Three pedestrians have been killed in the past four months in New York's Brooklyn district. They all walked into busy traffic because they were distracted by an electronic device of some **sort**. In one case, **bystanders** shouted at someone to be careful seconds before they were knocked down and became another traffic accident **statistic**. Despite the alarming increase in deaths caused by distractions from iPods etc, New Yorkers are likely to **ignore** any new law forbidding their use in the streets. Many residents believe Kruger is going too **far** and that the law treats people as though they had no sense. Brooklyn resident Mary Alberto was **outraged** at Kruger's proposal. She said: "Enough is **enough**. I have been able to cross the street since I was eight." She also joked that one day people might be fined for not looking both ways.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - b 2 - c 3 - a 4 - d 5 - a 6 - a 7 - b 8 - d 9 - b 10 - c 11 - a 12 - c