

Bird flu pandemic a possibility (Tue 25 Jan)

WARM UPS

1. CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about chicken (the meat) / chickens (the birds) / flu / bird flu / pandemics / SARS / scare stories / capital city shutdowns ...

Change topic / partner frequently to energize the class.

2. CHICKEN BRAINSTORM: Write down any words you associate with chickens. Talk about them

3. MY HEALTH: Talk about your health, especially in relation to colds. In groups find out which person is the most / least susceptible to colds or flu, based on their previous history of contraction.

4. REMEDIES: Play doctor for 10 minutes and discuss ways of preventing or curing colds in your families / countries. Present these to the class, as each country or person has different remedies, often weird and wild and wonderful. Take a vote (as a class or in groups) to decide which preventative measures are best.

5. BE PREPARED: Talk about how to prepare for and cope with a sudden government warning that a pandemic is imminent. In groups formulate a plan of action for the city in which students are studying and living. List the dangers, find the solutions, and devise five pieces of advice to be given to the public. Present each plan of action. The audience 'picks holes' in each plan to find flaws. Vote on the best plan.

PRE READING EXERCISES

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries, or a search engine, to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'bird' and 'flu'.

TRUE / FALSE: Predict from the headline whether these statements are true or false:

- (a) The threat of a lethal bird flu pandemic is imminent. T / F
- (b) In a worse case scenario hundreds around the world could die. T / F
- (c) The virus cannot be transmitted from person to person. T / F
- (d) Scientists believe a new strain has mutated and has jumped species. T / F
- (e) Researchers have warned of the urgent need to prepare for a future influenza pandemic. T / F
- (f) In 1918 a bird flu pandemic killed 40 million people worldwide. T / F
- (g) In Vietnam 900 people have died from bird flu this month. T / F
- (h) British politicians are devising plans to close down London. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| (a) threat | passed |
| (b) pandemic | creating |
| (c) transmitted | psyched up |
| (d) mutated | presence |
| (e) isolated | menacing |
| (f) on alert | possibility |
| (g) advent | changed |
| (h) like wildfire | rapidly |
| (i) sobering | outbreak |
| (j) devising | solitary |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases based on the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) The threat of a | transmissions |
| (b) may be closer | the virus |
| (c) it is now | than we think |
| (d) the result of direct | travel |
| (e) infected with | a pandemic |
| (f) The advent of international | wildfire |
| (g) spread like | concerned about ... |
| (h) We are deeply | believed |
| (i) human-to-human | lethal bird flu pandemic |
| (j) in the event of | contact with |

GAP FILL

Bird flu pandemic a possibility (Tue 25 Jan)

bNE: The _____ of a lethal bird flu pandemic may be closer than we think, warned scientists today. In a worse case _____ tens of millions could die around the world, as it is now believed the virus could be transmitted from human to human. Most of the cases of avian flu deaths have so far been the _____ of direct contact with infected chickens, however, scientists believe a new strain has mutated and has _____ species, enabling it to spread from person to person. The New England Journal of Medicine reports the case of a Thai woman who was _____ with the virus from her daughter. The mother had never been in direct contact with chickens. Although so far an isolated case, researchers have warned of “the _____ need to prepare for a future influenza pandemic”.

infected urgent scenario jumped threat result

This news has put governments around the world on _____ in preparing for a possible outbreak. The _____ of international travel means any virus might spread like wildfire between the world’s major cities. A sobering _____ of just how deadly and global a bird flu virus can be is the 1918 pandemic which killed 40 million people worldwide. Thailand's deputy prime minister Chaturon Chaisaeng said yesterday, "We are deeply _____ about human-to-human transmissions, which would be very dangerous, and it is close." Neighbouring Vietnam, where nine people have died from bird flu this month, is _____ itself for a major outbreak, with all hospitals on alert. Farther afield, it is reported British politicians are devising plans to close down London in the _____ of a pandemic.

reminder concerned event alert bracing advent

DISCUSSION: Ask each other the following questions:

- (a) Are you worried about the new threat of a pandemic?
- (b) If the government issued a serious pandemic alert, what would you do now / tomorrow / next week?
- (c) Do you like eating chicken?
- (d) Would you visit Thailand or Vietnam right now?
- (e) Should the government be educating us on this danger?
- (f) If your city was totally closed down, what would life be like? What would you do every day?
- (g) Is this just another scare story, like SARS?
- (h) Could you kill a chicken?
- (i) Have you seen the movie ‘Outbreak’ or any other movies about pandemics?
- (j) Teacher’s / Students’ additional questions.

INTERNET / WEB LINKS:

The 1918 influenza pandemic:

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/virus/uda/>

The New England Journal of Medicine:

<http://content.nejm.org/current.shtml>

The World Health Organization and Avian Flu:

<http://content.nejm.org/current.shtml>

WHO avian flu fact sheet:

http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_01_15/en/

Thai Government Ministry of Health homepage on avian flu:

<http://eng.moph.go.th/>

Chicken recipes:

<http://www.eatchicken.com/>

BBC News about Britain's avian flu preparedness:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/4201725.stm>

3. CHICKEN POSTER: Create a poster about chickens.

HOMEWORK

CHICKEN POSTER: Create a poster about chickens.

LETTER TO HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Write a letter to the health department about your fears regarding avian bird flu. Five fears and questions.

FULL TEXT

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This news has put governments around the world on **alert** in preparing for a possible outbreak. The **advent** of international travel means any virus might spread like wildfire between the world's major cities. A sobering **reminder** of just how deadly and global a bird flu virus can be is the 1918 pandemic which killed 40 million people worldwide. Thailand's deputy prime minister Chaturon Chaisaeng said yesterday, "We are deeply **concerned** about human-to-human transmissions, which would be very dangerous, and it is close." Neighbouring Vietnam, where nine people have died from bird flu this month, is **bracing** itself for a major outbreak, with all hospitals on alert. Farther afield, it is reported British politicians are devising plans to close down London in the **event** of a pandemic.