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Japanese student bombs classroom

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Today's contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
After Reading	6
Discussion	7
Speaking	8
Listening Gap Fill	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

11 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Japanese student bombs classroom

BNE: Japan is in a state of bewilderment today after a high school student detonated a homemade bomb in a classroom at his school. A glass jar crammed with gunpowder and other substances was hurled into the room and shattered with a deafening roar. Fifty-eight students received lacerations from shards of flying glass and metal, while others suffered from shock. One boy remains in a serious condition after suffering injuries to his abdomen. An 18-year-old student was arrested on suspicion of assault. Police cannot release his name because he is a minor under Japanese law.

This bombing incident is the latest in a spate of violent attacks and murders by disaffected members of Japan's youth. Japan's famously law-abiding citizens are becoming increasingly fearful of their young. Deadly and disturbing acts of violence committed by minors have increased greatly in the past decade. More often than not the perpetrators have exhibited no previous violent tendencies. The boy who made the explosive device is reported as being "normal". He was never late for school or skipped class and has "above average" grades. He was quoted as saying that he was driven by a grudge against a fellow student.

WARM-UPS

1. TEENAGERS: In pairs / groups, talk about teenagers in your country. Are they dangerous? Are they good kids? Are teenagers the same all over the world? Is being a teenager easy or difficult? Which of these things would you like to change about teenagers?

- Hairstyles
- Sleeping patterns
- Usefulness
- Manners
- Habits
- Musical tastes
- Friends
- Homework and housework
- Fashion sense
- Other

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

Japan / bewilderment / high school / gunpowder / shock / assault / bombing incidents / law-abiding citizens / violence / grudges

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

3. TEENAGERS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with teenagers. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. TEENAGER OPINIONS: Talk with your partner(s) about how much you agree with these opinions.

- a. Being a teenager is the worst time of our lives.
- b. Adults don't like teenagers.
- c. Teenagers should be given more respect.
- d. Older people can learn a lot from teenagers.
- e. Teenagers are not kids. They are adults.
- f. Sixteen-year-olds who commit crimes should be punished under the law as adults.
- g. Teenagers don't have enough respect for adults.
- h. Teenagers are dangerous.
- i. I'd love to be a teenager again / I'd love to stay a teenager.
- j. Teenagers belong to a completely different culture.

5. TEENAGE STAGES: In pairs / groups, identify the different things that happen to teenagers or go on in their minds during each teenage year. Change partners and compare the things you talked about with your first partner(s).

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 student in Japan detonated a bomb in a school classroom. | T / F |
| b. The student bought the bomb from an online military store. | T / F |
| c. Students received lacerations from flying shards of glass. | T / F |
| d. The boy was arrested and imprisoned on charges of terrorism. | T / F |
| e. This is the first time a Japanese teenager has been so violent. | T / F |
| f. Japan's citizens are becoming increasingly fearful of their young. | T / F |
| g. Teachers said the boy was a deviant and a delinquent. | T / F |
| h. The boy said he had a grudge against another student. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a. bewilderment | inclinations |
| b. detonated | packed |
| c. crammed | slew |
| d. shards | alienated |
| e. minor | set off |
| f. spate | splinters |
| g. disaffected | grievance |
| h. perpetrators | perplexity |
| i. tendencies | lawbreakers |
| j. grudge | junior |

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

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. in a state of | tendencies |
| b. detonated a | of flying glass |
| c. a deafening | citizens |
| d. shards | homemade bomb |
| e. remains in a serious | grudge against a fellow student |
| f. the latest in a | bewilderment |
| g. law-abiding | condition |
| h. acts of violence committed | spate of violent attacks |
| i. violent | by minors |
| j. he was driven by a | roar |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

Japanese student bombs classroom

BNE: Japan is in a _____ of bewilderment today after a high school student _____ a homemade bomb in a classroom at his school. A glass jar crammed with gunpowder and other substances was _____ into the room and shattered with a deafening _____. Fifty-eight students received _____ from shards of flying glass and metal, while others suffered from _____. One boy remains in a serious condition after suffering injuries to his _____. An 18-year-old student was arrested on suspicion of _____. Police cannot release his name because he is a minor under Japanese law.

roar
abdomen
detonated
assault
hurled
state
shock
lacerations

This bombing incident is the latest in a _____ of violent attacks and murders by _____ members of Japan's youth. Japan's famously law-_____ citizens are becoming increasingly fearful of their young. Deadly and disturbing acts of violence _____ by minors have increased greatly in the past decade. More often than not the _____ have exhibited no previous violent _____. The boy who made the explosive device is reported as being "normal". He was never late for school or _____ class and has "above average" grades. He was quoted as saying that he was driven by a _____ against a fellow student.

disaffected
skipped
tendencies
spate
committed
grudge
abiding
perpetrators

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 TEENAGER SURVEY: In pairs / groups write down questions about teenagers and teenage problems.

- 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:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| • state | • spate |
| • crammed | • fearful |
| • roar | • acts |
| • shards | • tendencies |
| • abdomen | • skipped |
| • name | • grudge |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What went through your head when you read this headline?
- b. What adjective(s) describe your feelings about this story?
- c. What is your image of Japanese teenagers?
- d. Are you surprised that a Japanese high school student would detonate a bomb in his classroom?
- e. What crazy things did students do when you were at high school?
- f. Describe the worst behaved student in your school or class?
- g. Are the schools in your country safe?
- h. Is society to blame when something like this happens?
- i. What's the worst thing you did when you were at school?
- j. Do you worry about the future of your country when you hear stories like this?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. Are you interested in news from Japan?
- c. Would this kind of thing happen in your country?
- d. Are teenagers dangerous in your country?
- e. What punishment should this young man receive?
- f. Is an 18-year-old high school student a boy or a man?
- g. Have you become more suspicious of young people?
- h. Have you ever held a grudge against anyone?
- i. Were (Are) you a model student at school?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

TEENAGE ANGST: Imagine you are counselors with the organization T.A.R.P (Teenagers Are Real People).

In pairs / groups, make brief notes about the advice and guidelines you would give to teenagers with the problems in the table below.

Before giving advice, you need to provide the reason and an explanation for the problem so the teenager understands it better.

PROBLEM	REASON / EXPLANATION	ADVICE
I can't find a boy/girlfriend.		
My parents hassle me to study non-stop.		
My teacher has asked me on a date.		
I don't know how to tell my parents I'm gay.		
My body is much less developed than other kids in my class.		
I don't want to go outside because I have so much acne.		
My friends are pressuring me to smoke marijuana.		
I hate myself.		

Role play a student with a problem and a counselor. (The student must always find a reason not to accept the counselor's advice.)

Talk about the problems you had as a teenager. Did you experience any of the above problems?

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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This bombing incident is the latest _____ violent attacks and murders by _____ of Japan's youth. Japan's famously law-abiding citizens are becoming increasingly fearful of their young. Deadly and _____ of violence committed by minors have increased greatly in the past decade. More often than not the _____ no previous violent tendencies. The boy who made the explosive device is reported as being "normal". He was never late for school or skipped class and has "above average" grades. He was quoted as saying that he was _____ against a fellow student.

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 Japanese youth. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. TEENAGE HELP: Write a fact sheet for teenagers giving them some simple tips on how to survive their teenage years. Show your tips to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you have similar ideas?

4. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT: Imagine you are a psychology counselor for teenagers. Write an assessment of the Japanese high school student who bombed his classroom. Read your assessment to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. bewildered	perplexity
b. detonated	set off
c. crammed	packed
d. shards	splinters
e. minor	junior
f. spate	slew
g. disaffected	alienated
h. perpetrators	lawbreakers
i. tendencies	inclinations
j. grudge	grievance

PHRASE MATCH:

a. in a state of	bewilderment
b. detonated a	homemade bomb
c. a deafening	roar
d. shards	of flying glass
e. remains in a serious	condition
f. the latest in a	spate of violent attacks
g. law-abiding	citizens
h. acts of violence committed	by minors
i. violent	tendencies
j. he was driven by a	grudge against a fellow student

GAP FILL:

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BNE: Japan is in a **state** of bewilderment today after a high school student **detonated** a homemade bomb in a classroom at his school. A glass jar crammed with gunpowder and other substances was **hurled** into the room and shattered with a deafening **roar**. Fifty-eight students received **lacerations** from shards of flying glass and metal, while others suffered from **shock**. One boy remains in a serious condition after suffering injuries to his **abdomen**. An 18-year-old student was arrested on suspicion of **assault**. Police cannot release his name because he is a minor under Japanese law.

This bombing incident is the latest in a **spate** of violent attacks and murders by **disaffected** members of Japan's youth. Japan's famously law-**abiding** citizens are becoming increasingly fearful of their young. Deadly and disturbing acts of violence **committed** by minors have increased greatly in the past decade. More often than not the **perpetrators** have exhibited no previous violent **tendencies**. The boy who made the explosive device is reported as being "normal". He was never late for school or **skipped** class and has "above average" grades. He was quoted as saying that he was driven by a **grudge** against a fellow student.