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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **Terrorists strike heart of London**

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**8 July, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Terrorists strike heart of London**

**BNE:** London has experienced its worst nightmare as terrorists created carnage at its heart on Thursday morning. Four coordinated explosions ripped through the transport system in the very center of the city at the height of the morning rush hour. The latest death toll is 38, with over 700 injured. The devastating and cowardly attacks took place against three packed subway trains and one of London's iconic double decker buses, which was blown apart by one of the blasts. London was plunged into total chaos as police and rescue services evacuated subway stations and cordoned off affected areas, which immediately became crime scenes. The entire transportation system was closed down.

A leading London police officer said it was inevitable London would be attacked and that it was a miracle that terrorism had not come earlier. A previously unknown organization calling itself the Secret Group of Al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe has claimed responsibility for the attacks. Leaders at the G8 meeting were unreservedly united in their condemnation of the attacks and collectively resolved to step up the fight against terror. A visibly shocked and shaken British Prime Minister Tony Blair denounced the latest atrocity. He said: "It's particularly barbaric that this has happened on a day when people are meeting to try to help the problems of poverty in Africa."

## WARM-UPS

**1. THE MINUTES AFTER:** What would you do if you were caught up in a major terrorist strike? Would you panic or stay calm? Would you run away or stay to help? Talk with your partner(s) about what would you do in the minutes or hours after experiencing a bomb attack.

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

*London / worst nightmares / carnage / explosions / rush hour / cowards / chaos / double decker buses / miracles / the fight against terror / barbarism*

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

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

**4. TERROR OPINIONS:** In pairs / groups, talk about how far you agree with these opinions about the terror attacks on London.

- a. The attacks in London are totally because of Britain's involvement in Iraq.
- b. The terrorists are attacking the whole of Western civilization.
- c. Terror attacks like this will never disappear.
- d. I would never change my lifestyle because of terrorist activities.
- e. Terrorists don't understand that bomb attacks do not achieve anything.
- f. It's not right that innocent Iraqis also lose their lives every day but receive little media attention.
- g. Terrorist attacks will happen in more of the world's major cities.
- h. It's ridiculous that the attacks on London happened when G8 leaders are trying to help the poor in Africa.
- i. Western leaders do not understand the suffering of Iraqis and Palestinians.
- j. Tony Blair should now pull British forces out of Iraq.

**5. WAR FIGURES:** In pairs / groups, talk about these figures that are playing a part or who have played a part in the war on terror. What part have they played?

Osama bin Laden  
George W. Bush  
Tony Blair  
Other

Pervez Musharraf  
Ariel Sharon  
Vladimir Putin  
Other

## **BEFORE READING / LISTENING**

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

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. London has been targeted in a major terrorist attack.              | T / F |
| b. The attacks took place during the quieter hours of the day.        | T / F |
| c. Police ordered people to stay inside the subway stations.          | T / F |
| d. London's transport system continued running despite the attacks.   | T / F |
| e. A top police officer said an attack on London had been inevitable. | T / F |
| f. An unknown group linked to Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility.        | T / F |
| g. G8 leaders in Scotland made no comment about the attacks.          | T / F |
| h. Tony Blair said the attacks were acts of barbarity.                | T / F |

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

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a. carnage      | turmoil        |
| b. toll         | monstrousness  |
| c. devastating  | imminent       |
| d. chaos        | wholeheartedly |
| e. cordoned     | count          |
| f. inevitable   | savage         |
| g. unreservedly | sealed         |
| h. denounced    | bloodshed      |
| i. atrocity     | condemned      |
| j. barbaric     | deadly         |

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

- |                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. worst               | off affected areas       |
| b. created             | in their condemnation    |
| c. the height of       | into total chaos         |
| d. plunged             | carnage                  |
| e. cordoned            | and shaken               |
| f. it was inevitable   | nightmare                |
| g. previously unknown  | barbaric                 |
| h. unreservedly united | London would be attacked |
| i. visibly shocked     | the morning rush hour    |
| j. particularly        | organization             |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**WORD ORDER:** Put the underlined words back in correct order.

### **Terrorists strike heart of London**

**BNE:** London has experienced worst its as nightmare terrorists created heart its carnage at on Thursday morning. Four coordinated explosions ripped through the transport system in the very center of the city of the height at the morning rush hour. The latest death toll is 38, with over 700 injured. The devastating and cowardly attacks took place against three packed subway trains and one of London's iconic double decker buses, which blown was by apart one of the blasts. London was plunged into total chaos as police and rescue services evacuated subway stations off areas affected and cordoned, which immediately became crime scenes. The entire transportation system was closed down.

A leading London police officer said it was London attacked would be inevitable and that it was a miracle that terrorism had not come earlier. A calling unknown itself previously organization the Secret Group of Al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe has claimed responsibility for the attacks. Leaders at the G8 meeting united were in their unreservedly condemnation of the attacks and resolved to step collectively up the fight against terror. A visibly shocked and shaken British Prime Minister Tony Blair denounced the latest atrocity. He said: "It's particularly that happened barbaric has this on a day when people are meeting to try to help the problems of poverty in Africa."

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

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

- 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. WORD ORDER:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers.

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT SAFETY IN CITIES SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about safety in cities and the threat of terrorist attacks.

- 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:

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| • nightmare | • inevitable   |
| • ripped    | • unknown      |
| • packed    | • unreservedly |
| • iconic    | • visibly      |
| • plunged   | • atrocity     |
| • cordoned  | • barbaric     |

## **DISCUSSION**

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

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. What were you doing when you first heard this news?
- c. Are you surprised London was attacked?
- d. Will these attacks make you think twice about visiting London?
- e. What do you think the terrorists hope to achieve?
- f. Do you think the world is different after 9-11?
- g. What will it take to stop terrorists attacking cities?
- h. Do you think these attacks are on the whole of the civilized world or just the people of London?
- i. How do you think you would react in a bomb blast?
- j. Will you be more vigilant as a result of these attacks?

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

- a. Did you learn anything from reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Would you use the subway system in London today?
- d. Do you think the bombs will change life in London?
- e. Do you think terrorists will ever stop targeting innocent people?
- f. Have you followed this story a lot on TV, the Internet or in newspapers?
- g. Do you think the attacks were planned to coincide with the G8 meeting or Olympics announcement?
- h. What message would you send to the people of London?
- i. What message would you send to those who planned these attacks?
- 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**

### **HEIGHTENED SECURITY:**

Imagine you are responsible for implementing safety precautions in a major city. You must take measures to reduce the possibilities of terrorism. What changes will you make to the areas in the column on the left?

| AREAS                               | CHANGES |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Public transport                    |         |
| Airports                            |         |
| Information on TV and in newspapers |         |
| Major tourist areas                 |         |
| Police force                        |         |
| Other                               |         |

After you have finished, change partners and show each other your plans. Find flaws or problems and give each other advice on how to improve your plans.

Return to your original partners and incorporate the advice you received into revising your original plans.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Terrorists strike heart of London**

**BNE:** London has experienced its \_\_\_\_\_ as terrorists created carnage at its heart on Thursday morning. Four coordinated explosions \_\_\_\_\_ through the transport system in the very center of the city at \_\_\_\_\_ the morning rush hour. The latest \_\_\_\_\_ is 38, with over 700 injured. The devastating and cowardly attacks took place against three \_\_\_\_\_ subway trains and one of London's iconic double decker buses, which was \_\_\_\_\_ by one of the blasts. London was \_\_\_\_\_ into \_\_\_\_\_ as police and rescue services evacuated subway stations and \_\_\_\_\_ affected areas, which immediately became crime scenes. \_\_\_\_\_ transportation system was closed down.

A \_\_\_\_\_ London police officer said it was \_\_\_\_\_ London would be attacked and that it was a miracle that terrorism had not come earlier. A \_\_\_\_\_ organization calling itself the Secret Group of Al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe has claimed responsibility for the attacks. Leaders at the G8 meeting were \_\_\_\_\_ in their condemnation of the attacks and collectively resolved \_\_\_\_\_ the fight against terror. A visibly shocked and shaken British Prime Minister Tony Blair denounced the \_\_\_\_\_. He said: "It's particularly \_\_\_\_\_ that this has happened on a day when people are meeting to try to help the problems of poverty in Africa."

## **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 the terror strikes in London. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. WHAT CAN BE DONE?:** Write an essay outlining what you think should be done about the war on terror. What can world leaders do to prevent further attacks? State the main points of your essay to your classmates in your next lesson. Did everyone have similar ideas?

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to the planner of the terror attacks in London. Tell him / her what you think of their acts. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a. carnage      | bloodshed      |
| b. toll         | count          |
| c. devastating  | deadly         |
| d. chaos        | turmoil        |
| e. cordoned     | sealed         |
| f. inevitable   | imminent       |
| g. unreservedly | wholeheartedly |
| h. denounced    | condemned      |
| i. atrocity     | monstrousness  |
| j. barbaric     | savage         |

### PHRASE MATCH:

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. worst               | nightmare                |
| b. created             | carnage                  |
| c. the height of       | the morning rush hour    |
| d. plunged             | into total chaos         |
| e. cordoned            | off affected areas       |
| f. it was inevitable   | London would be attacked |
| g. previously unknown  | organization             |
| h. unreservedly united | in their condemnation    |
| i. visibly shocked     | and shaken               |
| j. particularly        | barbaric                 |

### WORD ORDER:

#### Terrorists strike heart of London

**BNE:** London has experienced its worst nightmare as terrorists created carnage at its heart on Thursday morning. Four coordinated explosions ripped through the transport system in the very center of the city at the height of the morning rush hour. The latest death toll is 38, with over 700 injured. The devastating and cowardly attacks took place against three packed subway trains and one of London's iconic double decker buses, which was blown apart by one of the blasts. London was plunged into total chaos as police and rescue services evacuated subway stations and cordoned off affected areas, which immediately became crime scenes. The entire transportation system was closed down.

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