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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 20/12/12

The end of the world – or is it?

Today, let's talk about the end of the world. According to the ancient Mayan calendar it was meant to end on December 21st 2012. By reading this lesson after this date the world is obviously still here!

There have been many superstitions and predictions about December 21st. Some people might say the world might not end exactly on this date but soon after. Then again the world might just last a few more thousand years...

How will it end is again open to discussion. Will it be triggered by a North Korean nuclear rocket or an American response? Could Syria start World War Three that might pre-empt Russia to bomb America and the odd nuke to fly around thus creating the end of the world?

Global warming could also destroy the world. It could also end because of a natural disaster. The earth's crust could split open. We could see multiple volcanoes that could blackout the sky. Then again the earth could be hit by a giant meteor. What do you do if that happens?

Do we all go and hide in a tunnel under a mountain? Perhaps we dig a hole and hide in our back garden? Either way, how long could we survive without air, food and water?

The ancient Mayan calendar tells of a world between the present earth cycle from August 11th 3114 BC to December 21st 2012. A clue could be in the stars in space.

There is talk of some mountain in France and another in Serbia that will transform themselves into giant alien spaceships that will take survivors or selected individuals to a new world. Perhaps December 22nd 2012 will simply be the beginning of a new Mayan cycle?

SPEAKING

Think of three things you know about the end of the world. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting lesson?
- 5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) Where might you hide?
- 2) What might Russia do?
- 3) What might America do?
- 4) What do you need to survive?
- 5) What might the mountain do?

Student B questions

- 1) What should have happened on December 21st?
- 2) Name the ancient people.
- 3) What does nuke mean?
- 4) Name the countries.
- 5) What are the other dates in the article?

Category: The World / End of the World / Mayan Calendar
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

The end of the world – or is it? – 20th December 2012

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with '**The end of the world**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

The end of the world - *In pairs* choose three things from the article about it.

Write them below.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Add three similar ideas of your own about it. Discuss together.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

WRITING / SPEAKING

Think of three things you might do if the world was going to end in the next three minutes! Then think of three things you might do if you had 24 hours' notice! Write down your thoughts.

The teacher will choose some students to read out their work to the class.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Do you believe in the end of the world?
- 3) Is World War Three about to start?
- 4) Are we going to see alien spaceships appearing above us?
- 5) Will the mountains in Serbia and France turn into UFOs?
- 6) What do you think will happen next?
- 7) Will you consider finding a tunnel under a mountain to hide in?
- 8) Will North Korea start World War Three by firing a nuclear missile?
- 9) Would you fly away in an alien spaceship?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the CNN TV studio. Today's interview is about: *The end of the world – or is it?*

- 1) A UFO believer
- 2) A NASA expert
- 3) A historian
- 4) Someone who thinks the end is nigh!

The teacher will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. You are in a coffee shop in your town/city. Start a conversation about: *'The end of the world – or is it?'* 5 mins.

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

Discuss the following...

The end of the world – or is it?

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Will a new Mayan calendar cycle start?
- 3) Will you dig a hole in the garden and go and hide in it if the end of the world does happen?
- 4) What will you do if a meteor strikes the earth?
- 5) Will global warming destroy the world?
- 6) Will the aliens be like those in the Close Encounters movie?
- 7) Have you packed your bag for the alien spaceship journey?
- 8) Why do we have a fascination with this subject?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson in English for you to understand?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

The end of the world – or is it? – 20th December 2012

GAP FILL: READING

The end of the world – or is it?

Today, let's talk about the end of the world. According to the (1)___ Mayan calendar it was meant to end on December 21st 2012. By reading this lesson after this date the world is (2)___ still here!

There have been many (3)___ and predictions about December 21st. Some people might say the world might not end exactly on this date but soon after. Then again the world might just last a few more thousand years...

How will it end is again open to (4)___ . Will it be triggered by a North Korean nuclear rocket or an American response? Could Syria start World War Three that might (5)___ Russia to bomb America and the odd (6)___ to fly around thus creating the end of the world?

Global warming could also destroy the world. It could also end because of a natural (7)___ . The earth's (8)___ could split open.

superstitions / discussion / ancient / disaster / pre-empt / nuke / obviously / crust

We could see multiple (1)___ that could blackout the sky. Then again the earth could be hit by a giant (2)___ . What do you do if that happens?

Do we all go and hide in a tunnel under a mountain? Perhaps we dig a hole and hide in our back garden? Either way, how long could we (3)___ without air, food and water?

The ancient Mayan (4)___ tells of a world between the present earth cycle from August 11th 3114 BC to December 21st 2012. A (5)___ could be in the stars in space.

There is talk of some (6)___ in France and another in Serbia that will transform themselves into giant alien (7)___ that will take survivors or selected individuals to a new world. Perhaps December 22nd 2012 will simply be the beginning of a new Mayan (8)___?

clue / cycle / mountain / volcanoes / spaceships / survive / calendar / meteor

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

The end of the world – or is it?

Today, let's talk about the end of the world. According to the ancient Mayan calendar it was meant to end on December 21st 2012. By reading (1)___ lesson after this date the world is obviously still here!

There have been many superstitions and predictions about December 21st. (2)___ people might say the world (3)___ not end exactly on this date but soon after. (4)___ again the world might just last a few more thousand years...

How will it end is again open to discussion. Will it be triggered by a North Korean nuclear rocket or an American response? Could Syria start World War Three (5)___ might pre-empt Russia to bomb America and the odd nuke to fly around (6)___ creating the end of the world?

Global warming could (7)___ destroy the world. It could also end because of a natural disaster. The earth's crust (8)___ split open.

could / that / thus / some / this / then / also / might

We could see multiple volcanoes that could blackout the sky. Then again the earth could be hit (1)___ a giant meteor. What do you do (2)___ that happens?

Do (3)___ all go and hide in a tunnel under a mountain? Perhaps we dig a hole and hide in (4)___ back garden? Either way, how long could we survive without air, food and water?

The ancient Mayan calendar tells (5)___ a world between the present earth cycle from August 11th 3114 BC to December 21st 2012. (6)___ clue could be (7)___ the stars in space.

There is talk of some mountain in France and another in Serbia that will transform themselves into giant alien spaceships that will take survivors (8)___ selected individuals to a new world. Perhaps December 22nd 2012 will simply be the beginning of a new Mayan cycle?

of / we / if / by / in / or / our / a

GAP FILL: LISTENING

The end of the world – or is it?

Today, let's talk about _____. According to the ancient Mayan calendar it was meant to end on December 21st 2012. By reading this lesson after this date the world is obviously still here!

There have been many _____ predictions about December 21st. Some people might say the world might not end exactly on this date but soon after. Then again the world might just last a few more thousand years...

How will it end is again open to discussion. Will it be triggered by a _____ rocket or an American response? Could Syria start World War Three that might pre-empt Russia to bomb America and _____ around thus creating the end of the world?

Global warming could also destroy the world. It could also end because of a natural disaster. The _____ split open.

We could see multiple volcanoes that could blackout the sky. Then again the earth could be hit by a giant meteor. What do you do if that happens? Do we all go and _____ under a mountain? Perhaps we dig a hole and hide in our back garden? Either way, how long could we survive without air, food and water?

The ancient _____ tells of a world between the present earth cycle from August 11th 3114 BC to December 21st 2012. A clue could be _____.

There is talk of some mountain in France and another in Serbia that will transform themselves into _____ that will take survivors or selected individuals to a new world. Perhaps December 22nd 2012 will simply be the beginning of _____?

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *In pairs*, write down as many *movies or books* (you know) *with aliens in them. One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) The end of the world _____
- 2) The ancient _____
- 3) An alien _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **The end of the world – or is it?** Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) ancient
- 2) obviously
- 3) superstitious
- 4) discussion
- 5) pre-empt
- 6) nuke
- 7) disaster
- 8) nuke

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) volcanoes
- 2) discussion
- 3) calendar
- 4) ancient
- 5) cycle
- 6) mountain
- 7) spaceships
- 8) alien
- 9) individuals
- 10) perhaps

ANSWERS

- 1) volcanoes
- 2) meteor
- 3) survive
- 4) calendar
- 5) clue
- 6) mountain
- 7) spaceships
- 8) cycle

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) obviously
- 12) superstitions
- 13) predictions
- 14) might
- 15) exactly
- 16) could
- 17) nuke
- 18) thus
- 19) disaster
- 20) transform

The end of the world – or is it? – *20th December 2012*