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Koreas joined by first phone link

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0507/050724-phone.html>

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24 July, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Koreas joined by first phone link

BNE: North and South Korea have installed the first direct telephone link between their two countries in fifty years. All lines were disconnected after the Korean War ended in 1953. The only direct connection since then has been a single line between the two governments. Families and neighbors have been cut off from one another for five decades.

The landmark technological event is part of preparations for video reunions of families that have been separated since 1953. Just a few lucky families that have been divided for fifty years will soon get their chance to briefly talk to each other via a videophone on August 15, the 60th anniversary of the end of Japanese colonial rule.

As part of the technological revolution emerging on the Korean peninsula, a fax machine now also connects the two capitals. Unfortunately, only top-level government officials are authorized to use it. Receiving faxes from the outside world is still too dangerous an option for the highly secretive and paranoid North Korean regime.

Innovations continue with the laying of a fiber-optic cable linking the town of Munsan in South Korea to the North Korean city of Kaesong on Monday (July 25). This seems a token measure, as no one will be hooked up to take advantage of the broadband Internet connection. North Korea has banned the Internet and mobile phones.

WARM-UPS

1. PHONE HISTORY: In pairs / groups, talk about your history with the telephone. Can you remember using the phone as a child? What was your family phone like years ago? How important is the phone to you now? Have you given or received any happy or sad news over the phone?

2. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think the telephone is the greatest invention ever. Students B think the car is the greatest invention ever. Change partners often.

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

North Korea / South Korea / telephones / The Korean War / family reunions / videophones / technological revolutions / fax machines / the Internet / broadband

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

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

5. MY MOBILE: If you have your mobile phone with you, put it on your desk for your partner(s) to see. Talk about your phones.

6. PHONE SENTENCES: Complete the five sentence starters below. Tell your partner(s) what you wrote and then talk about your sentences.

- a. Telephones are _____.
- b. A telephone is _____.
- c. Telephoning _____.
- d. Without a telephone _____.
- e. With a telephone _____.
- f. My telephone _____.

Change partners and compare what you talked about.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. The first phone link in history was between North and South Korea. | T / F |
| b. Just one phone line has connected the two Koreas since 1953. | T / F |
| c. Korean families will soon be able to talk to each other by videophone. | T / F |
| d. The videophone reunions will be just for a lucky few on one day only. | T / F |
| e. There are thousands of fax machines connecting the two Koreas. | T / F |
| f. North Korea is an extremely open country. | T / F |
| g. One Internet cable will soon connect North and South Korea. | T / F |
| h. Most North Koreans have mobile phones and Internet access. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. installed | move |
| b. connection | fixed up |
| c. landmark | leadership |
| d. separated | outlawed |
| e. emerging | modernization |
| f. authorized | historic |
| g. regime | line |
| h. innovations | unfolding |
| i. measure | permitted |
| j. banned | divided |

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. a single line | rule |
| b. neighbors have been cut | fiber-optic cable |
| c. landmark | off from one another |
| d. briefly talk to each other | peninsula |
| e. the end of Japanese colonial | paranoid North Korean regime |
| f. Korean | up |
| g. highly secretive and | between the two governments |
| h. the laying of a | measure |
| i. a token | via a videophone |
| j. no one will be hooked | technological event |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

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The _____ technological event is part of preparations for video reunions of families that have been separated since 1953. Just a few _____ families that have been divided for fifty years will soon get their chance to _____ talk to each other via a videophone on August 15, the 60th anniversary of the end of Japanese colonial _____.

As part of the technological revolution _____ on the Korean _____, a fax machine now also connects the two capitals. Unfortunately, only top-level government officials are authorized to use it. Receiving faxes from the outside world is still too dangerous an option for the highly secretive and _____ North Korean _____.

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landmark

cut

rule

link

briefly

decades

direct

lucky

banned

laying

peninsula

hooked

paranoid

emerging

regime

token

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 "TELEPHONE" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about telephones.

- 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:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| • installed | • revolution |
| • disconnected | • authorized |
| • decades | • paranoid |
| • landmark | • cable |
| • divided | • token |
| • colonial | • advantage |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of the separation of the two Koreas?
- d. How important is the telephone to you?
- e. What must it be like to be cut off from your family for 50 years?
- f. What would you say to a family member you hadn't spoken to for fifty years?
- g. Why do you think North Korea has not allowed its people to talk to their family members in South Korea?
- h. What would your life be like without a telephone?
- i. What do you think of just one fax machine linking the Koreas?
- j. What do you think would happen if ordinary North Koreans got Internet access?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Have you ever spoken to anyone via a videophone?
- d. What is your opinion of North Korea?
- e. Why do you think North Korea is so secretive and paranoid?
- f. How have the Internet and mobile phones changed your life?
- g. Does your country ban any technology you'd like to use?
- h. When do you think North Koreans will be able to live in an open society?
- i. What technological innovations would you like to see with mobile phones?
- 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

TECHNOLOGY: Ask your partner(s) questions by choosing a question starter in the first column with a word or phrase in the second column.

Have you ever...	mobile phone
What do you think of...	Skype
Do you...	e-mails
What kind of...	spam
Have you heard of...	phishing
When was the last time...	the Internet
Could you live without...	future
Would you like...	a higher speed Internet connection
	videophone
	telephone answering machine
	voicemail
	technology

Change partners and share what you heard from your earlier partner(s).

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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Innovations continue with _____ a fiber-optic cable linking the town of Munsan in South Korea to the North Korean city of Kaesong on Monday (July 25). This seems a _____, as no one will be _____ to take advantage of the broadband Internet connection. North Korea has banned the Internet and mobile phones.

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 relations between North and South Korea. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. FUTURE PHONES: Make a poster showing what mobile phones will be capable of twenty years from now. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all think about similar things?

4. LETTER TO KIM JONG IL: Write a letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. Explain your thoughts on why he has banned the Internet and mobile phones in his country. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. installed	fixed up
b. connection	line
c. landmark	historic
d. separated	divided
e. emerging	unfolding
f. authorized	permitted
g. regime	leadership
h. innovations	modernization
i. measure	move
j. banned	outlawed

PHRASE MATCH:

a. a single line	between the two governments
b. neighbors have been cut	off from one another
c. landmark	technological event
d. briefly talk to each other	via a videophone
e. the end of Japanese colonial	rule
f. Korean	peninsula
g. highly secretive and	paranoid North Korean regime
h. the laying of a	fiber-optic cable
i. a token	measure
j. no one will be hooked	up

GAP FILL:

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The **landmark** technological event is part of preparations for video reunions of families that have been separated since 1953. Just a few **lucky** families that have been divided for fifty years will soon get their chance to **briefly** talk to each other via a videophone on August 15, the 60th anniversary of the end of Japanese colonial **rule**.

As part of the technological revolution **emerging** on the Korean **peninsula**, a fax machine now also connects the two capitals. Unfortunately, only top-level government officials are authorized to use it. Receiving faxes from the outside world is still too dangerous an option for the highly secretive and **paranoid** North Korean **regime**.

Innovations continue with the **laying** of a fiber-optic cable linking the town of Munsan in South Korea to the North Korean city of Kaesong on Monday (July 25). This seems a **token** measure, as no one will be **hooked** up to take advantage of the broadband Internet connection. North Korea has **banned** the Internet and mobile phones.