

"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"

The Breaking News English.com Resource Book

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Bedbugs on the rise in the U.S.A.

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0904/090416-bedbugs.html>

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THE ARTICLE

"Good night. Sleep tight. Don't let the bedbugs bite." This is a familiar rhyme often said when children go to bed. It is being used a lot more often in America today. Why? Bedbugs are making a comeback. The tiny bloodsucking creatures are becoming a huge problem in many of the nation's hospitals, hotels and shelters. America is seeing its biggest outbreak of bedbugs in over six decades. There have been so many complaints to local governments that the Environment Protection Agency has hosted its first ever bedbug summit. Experts at the two-day conference discussed ways to combat the problem. More than 300 people attended, including scientists, public health officials and pest control workers.

Many people thought bedbugs disappeared years ago. There are several reasons for their comeback. One is that authorities have banned many of the pesticides traditionally used to kill the insects. The chemicals were said to be bad for the environment. Another reason is the increase in world travel has seen the bugs arriving in large numbers in people's suitcases. Bedbugs live in bed mattresses and sofas. They feed on human blood, but do not usually carry diseases. However, some people have allergies to them. The rice-sized bugs give a nasty bite, which can lead to infection. The skin around the bitten area usually becomes swollen and gets extremely itchy. They are most active in the early hours of the morning.

WARM-UPS

1. BUGS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about bugs. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

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

sleeping tight / rhymes / tiny creatures / huge problems / complaints / pests / comebacks / pesticides / the environment / suitcases / allergies / infections / itchy

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. PESTS: What are the biggest pests? Complete this table. Share your answers with your partner(s). Change partners and share again.

Pests	Why they are pests	The best way to control them
Bedbugs		
Kangaroos		
Cockroaches		
Mice		
Rabbits		
Ants		

4. OUTBREAKS: Students A **strongly** believe there will be more and more outbreaks in the future; Students B **strongly** believe we will be able to control future outbreaks. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. CREATURES: With your partner(s), rate these bugs from most to least interesting / useful / scary. Share your ideas with your partner(s).

- bedbugs
- ants
- caterpillars
- spiders
- cockroaches
- scorpions
- moths
- centipedes

6. ITCHY: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'itchy'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Bedbugs in America are now living at higher and higher places. | T / F |
| b. Bedbugs are very small creatures that suck blood. | T / F |
| c. America's first ever conference on bedbugs was held over two days. | T / F |
| d. Bedbug specialists at a conference talked about helping the insects. | T / F |
| e. A ban on chemicals used to kill bedbugs is a reason for their comeback. | T / F |
| f. Bedbugs are arriving in America on airplanes and ships. | T / F |
| g. Bedbugs are the size of a small grape. | T / F |
| h. Early evening is the time bedbugs are most active. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. familiar | a. return |
| 2. comeback | b. very |
| 3. huge | c. died out |
| 4. hosted | d. normally |
| 5. combat | e. insect killers |
| 6. disappeared | f. unpleasant |
| 7. pesticides | g. fight |
| 8. usually | h. well-known |
| 9. nasty | i. enormous |
| 10. extremely | j. held |

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

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. a familiar rhyme often said when | a. kill the insects |
| 2. Bedbugs are making a | b. control workers |
| 3. America is seeing its biggest outbreak | c. hours of the morning |
| 4. ways to combat | d. to infection |
| 5. health officials and pest | e. of bedbugs |
| 6. Many people thought bedbugs | f. children go to bed |
| 7. the pesticides traditionally used to | g. human blood |
| 8. They feed on | h. comeback |
| 9. a nasty bite which can lead | i. the problem |
| 10. They are most active in the early | j. disappeared years ago |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

"Good night. Sleep _____. Don't let the bedbugs bite." This is a familiar _____ often said when children go to bed. It is being used a lot more often in America today. Why? Bedbugs are making a comeback. The tiny bloodsucking _____ are becoming a huge problem in many of the nation's hospitals, hotels and shelters. America is seeing its biggest _____ of bedbugs in over six _____. There have been so many complaints to local governments that the Environment Protection Agency has hosted its first ever bedbug summit. _____ at the two-day conference discussed ways to _____ the problem. More than 300 people attended, including scientists, public health officials and _____ control workers.

Many people thought bedbugs disappeared years ago. There are _____ reasons for their comeback. One is that authorities have banned many of the _____ traditionally used to kill the insects. The chemicals were said to be bad for the environment. Another reason is the _____ in world travel has seen the bugs arriving in large numbers in people's suitcases. Bedbugs live in bed mattresses and sofas. They _____ on human blood, but do not usually carry diseases. However, some people have _____ to them. The rice-sized bugs give a nasty _____, which can lead to infection. The skin around the _____ area usually becomes swollen and gets extremely itchy. They are most _____ in the early hours of the morning.

experts
decades
creatures
pest
tight
combat
rhyme
outbreak

bite
pesticides
several
active
bitten
increase
allergies
feed

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

"Good night. Sleep tight. Don't _____." This is a familiar rhyme often said when children go to bed. It is being used a lot more often in America today. Why? Bedbugs are _____. The tiny bloodsucking creatures are becoming a huge problem in many of the nation's hospitals, hotels and shelters. America _____ outbreak of bedbugs in over six decades. There have been so many complaints to local governments that the Environment Protection Agency has _____ bedbug summit. Experts at the two-day conference discussed ways to combat the problem. More than 300 people attended, including scientists, public health officials _____ workers.

Many people thought bedbugs disappeared years ago. There are _____ comeback. One is that authorities have banned many of the pesticides traditionally _____ insects. The chemicals were said to be bad for the environment. Another reason is the increase in world travel _____ arriving in large numbers in people's suitcases. Bedbugs live in bed mattresses and sofas. They feed on human blood, but do not usually carry diseases. However, some people have allergies to them. The rice-sized bugs _____, which can lead to infection. The skin around the bitten area usually becomes swollen and gets extremely itchy. They are most active _____ the morning.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

sleep	tight
--------------	--------------

- 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 activity. 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. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• familiar• often• tiny• seeing• local• combat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• several• banned• bad• numbers• rice• itchy
---	---

STUDENT BUGS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about bugs in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

BUGS DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'bedbugs'?
- c) Have you had any experiences with bedbugs?
- d) What's your favourite insect and why?
- e) What rhymes are there in your country for when children go to bed?
- f) What would you do if there were bedbugs in a hotel you stayed in?
- g) What do you think bedbugs do every day?
- h) Why do you think people decide to become a bedbug expert?
- i) What sort of person becomes a bedbug expert?
- j) Have you ever had a problem with insects?

Bedbugs on the rise in the U.S.A. – 16th April, 2009
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BUGS DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What kinds of insects do you see every day?
- c) Do you think authorities should bring back the pesticides that kill bedbugs?
- d) How can we stop bedbugs travelling on airplanes and ships?
- e) What do you think of the idea of insects feeding on your blood?
- f) Do you have any allergies?
- g) How would the world be different if insects were the size of footballs?
- h) What do you do when you get an insect bite?
- i) When are you most active? Why?
- j) What questions would you ask the bedbug experts?

LANGUAGE

"Good night. Sleep tight. Don't let the bedbugs (1) ____." This is a familiar rhyme often said when children go to bed. It is being used a lot more often in America today. Why? Bedbugs are (2) ____ a comeback. The tiny bloodsucking creatures are becoming a huge problem in many of the nation's hospitals, hotels and shelters. America is (3) ____ its biggest outbreak of bedbugs in over six decades. There have been so many complaints (4) ____ local governments that the Environment Protection Agency has hosted its first ever bedbug summit. Experts at the (5) ____ conference discussed ways to combat the problem. More than 300 people attended, (6) ____ scientists, public health officials and pest control workers.

Many people (7) ____ bedbugs disappeared years ago. There are several reasons for their comeback. One is that authorities have banned many of the pesticides traditionally (8) ____ to kill the insects. The chemicals were said to be bad for the environment. Another reason is the increase (9) ____ world travel has seen the bugs arriving in large (10) ____ in people's suitcases. Bedbugs live in bed mattresses and sofas. They feed on human blood, but do not usually carry diseases. However, some people have allergies to them. The rice-sized bugs give a nasty bite, which can (11) ____ to infection. The skin around the bitten area usually becomes swollen and gets extremely itchy. They are most active in the early hours of the morning.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) bitten | (b) bites | (c) bite | (d) biting |
| 2. | (a) made | (b) making | (c) makes | (d) make |
| 3. | (a) seeing | (b) looking | (c) eyeing | (d) staring |
| 4. | (a) so | (b) on | (c) by | (d) to |
| 5. | (a) two days | (b) today | (c) two-day | (d) two day |
| 6. | (a) included | (b) includes | (c) including | (d) inclusive |
| 7. | (a) thinking | (b) thought | (c) thoughts | (d) thoughtful |
| 8. | (a) used | (b) using | (c) use | (d) uses |
| 9. | (a) on | (b) in | (c) up | (d) by |
| 10. | (a) numbers | (b) numerals | (c) digits | (d) numerous |
| 11. | (a) leader | (b) led | (c) leads | (d) lead |
| 12. | (a) fast | (b) slow | (c) hurry | (d) early |

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 out more about bedbugs. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. PESTS: Make a poster about different pests. How can we combat them? Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. PEST CONTROL: Write a magazine article about a day in the life of a pest control worker. Include imaginary interviews with the worker and a pest.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to a bedbug expert. Ask him/her three questions about bedbugs. Give him/her three ideas on what he/she should do to combat the bedbug problem. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. familiar | a. well-known |
| 2. comeback | b. return |
| 3. huge | c. enormous |
| 4. hosted | d. held |
| 5. combat | e. fight |
| 6. disappeared | f. died out |
| 7. pesticides | g. insect killers |
| 8. usually | h. normally |
| 9. nasty | i. unpleasant |
| 10. extremely | j. very |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. a familiar rhyme often said when | a. children go to bed |
| 2. Bedbugs are making a | b. comeback |
| 3. America is seeing its biggest outbreak | c. of bedbugs |
| 4. ways to combat | d. the problem |
| 5. health officials and pest | e. control workers |
| 6. Many people thought bedbugs | f. disappeared years ago |
| 7. the pesticides traditionally used to | g. kill the insects |
| 8. They feed on | h. human blood |
| 9. a nasty bite which can lead | i. to infection |
| 10. They are most active in the early | j. hours of the morning |

GAP FILL:

Bedbugs on the rise in the U.S.A.

"Good night. Sleep **tight**. Don't let the bedbugs bite." This is a familiar **rhyme** often said when children go to bed. It is being used a lot more often in America today. Why? Bedbugs are making a comeback. The tiny bloodsucking **creatures** are becoming a huge problem in many of the nation's hospitals, hotels and shelters. America is seeing its biggest **outbreak** of bedbugs in over six **decades**. There have been so many complaints to local governments that the Environment Protection Agency has hosted its first ever bedbug summit. **Experts** at the two-day conference discussed ways to **combat** the problem. More than 300 people attended, including scientists, public health officials and **pest** control workers.

Many people thought bedbugs disappeared years ago. There are **several** reasons for their comeback. One is that authorities have banned many of the **pesticides** traditionally used to kill the insects. The chemicals were said to be bad for the environment. Another reason is the **increase** in world travel has seen the bugs arriving in large numbers in people's suitcases. Bedbugs live in bed mattresses and sofas. They **feed** on human blood, but do not usually carry diseases. However, some people have **allergies** to them. The rice-sized bugs give a nasty **bite**, which can lead to infection. The skin around the **bitten** area usually becomes swollen and gets extremely itchy. They are most **active** in the early hours of the morning.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - c 2 - b 3 - a 4 - d 5 - c 6 - c 7 - b 8 - a 9 - b 10 - a 11 - d 12 - d