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Russia warns against WMD in space

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3 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Russia warns against WMD in space

BNE: Russia has warned all countries against starting any star wars programs. Moscow said it would take tit-for-tat steps if any nation puts weapons in space. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov did not say the name of any particular country, but his message was clearly for the United States. Mr. Ivanov said Russia would retaliate by speeding up its own space weapons program.

Russia is worried by George W. Bush's interest in America's "star wars" program, which was started by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan. The plan to weaponize space has always been a major concern to Moscow. Russia has warned America for many decades against any build-up of weapons in space. However, America signed the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which bans weapons of mass destruction in space.

WARM-UPS

1. TIT-FOR-TAT: In pairs, see how many “tit-for-tat” responses you can think of against each other. Student A starts by telling Student B, “I’m going to take your pen.” Student B has to think of a tit-for-tat answer (“If you take my pen, I’ll...”). Student A then responds with another tit-for-tat response, and so on.

2. SPACE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you can think of about space. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them.

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

Russia / tit-for-tat / Star Wars / WMD in space / space / satellites / thorns / the White House / future wars

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

4. SPACE: What will we be doing in space over the next century? In pairs / groups, discuss whether you think these things will happen. Are they good or bad things?

- a. Space wars using weapons of mass destruction.
- b. Holiday resorts on the moon and tours in space.
- c. Space farms to grow all of the food we need.
- d. Mining on Mars for metals and minerals.
- e. Millions of people will live on space stations and in space cities.
- f. Space prisons.
- g. Space highways that go from Brazil to Japan, from New York to Sydney, etc.

5. STAR WARS OPINIONS: In pairs/ groups, discuss how far you agree with these opinions.

- a. There will be future wars in space.
- b. World War III will be fought from space.
- c. No country should ever put WMD in space.
- d. Man’s search for new ideas will mean WMD will be put into space.
- e. Russia is a lot more sensible than America over WMD.
- f. One day, terrorists will be able to fight from space.
- g. America needs WMD in space to keep world peace.
- h. We shouldn’t litter space with WMD. Keep it natural.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Russia has warned nations not to put WMD in space. | T / F |
| b. Moscow said it wanted to put its own WMD in space. | T / F |
| c. A Russian spokesman said the U.S. must stop its star wars program. | T / F |
| d. Moscow said it would retaliate by speeding up its own WMD program. | T / F |
| e. Russia is happy about George W. Bush's interest in space weapons. | T / F |
| f. Ex U.S. President Ronald Reagan started the star wars program. | T / F |
| g. This is the first time Russia has warned America about weapons. | T / F |
| h. America signed the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| a. warned | ex |
| b. programs | actions |
| c. steps | forbids |
| d. particular | strike back |
| e. retaliate | primary |
| f. worried | cautioned |
| g. former | increase |
| h. major | specific |
| i. build-up | concerned |
| j. bans | plans |

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

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. warned all countries | U.S. President Ronald Reagan |
| b. it would take | of any particular country |
| c. the name | 1967 Outer Space Treaty |
| d. his message was clearly | tit-for-tat steps |
| e. retaliate by speeding | concern |
| f. former | of weapons |
| g. The plan to weaponize | against... |
| h. a major | for the United States |
| i. build-up | up its own space weapons program |
| j. America signed the | space |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Russia warns against WMD in space

BNE: Russia has _____ all countries against _____ any star wars programs. Moscow said it would _____ tit-for-tat steps if any nation puts _____ in space. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov did not say the name of any _____ country, but his _____ was clearly for the United States. Mr. Ivanov said Russia would _____ by speeding up its _____ space weapons program.

*particular
starting
own
weapons
warned
retaliate
message
take*

Russia is _____ by George W. Bush's interest in America's "star wars" program, which was started by _____ U.S. President Ronald Reagan. The _____ to weaponize space has always been a _____ concern to Moscow. Russia has warned America for many _____ against any build-up of _____ in space. However, America _____ the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which _____ weapons of mass destruction in space.

*weapons
plan
signed
former
major
bans
worried
decades*

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 WEAPONS SURVEY: In pairs / groups write down questions about weapons of mass destruction.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make a mini-presentation to another group / the class 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:

- warned
- steps
- name
- clearly
- speeding
- worried
- former
- weaponize
- build-up
- 1967

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What did you think when you read the headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Do articles about WMD make you worried?
- d. Is this news good or bad?
- e. Are you afraid of an increase in the arms race?
- f. Will weapons in space become normal in the future?
- g. Is America a good world peacekeeper?
- h. Do you think Russia will ever join NATO?
- i. What would America do if China and Russia started star wars programs?
- j. Would you like to journey into space?

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

- a. Did you like reading the article?
- b. How did this news make you feel?
- c. Do you think American and Russian people have the same opinions on the issue of WMD in space?
- d. Which country has a more sensible arms program, Russia or America?
- e. Is Russia a dangerous country?
- f. What is the most dangerous country in the world?
- g. Would the world be a more or a less dangerous place if nuclear powers gave up their WMD?
- h. Do you think World War III will ever happen?
- i. Should space be left as it is – natural and without WMD?
- 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

“WMD IN SPACE” ROLE PLAY: This role play is to discuss whether or not there should be weapons of mass destruction in space. Team up with classmates who have the same role as you. Develop and discuss your ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins.

Introduce yourself to the other role players before the role play begins.

Role A

You are the owner of the world’s largest weapons maker. You really need both America and Russia to buy your products. You want your company to be number one in space weapons technology. It is the future of warfare. You are very suspicious of the Russian army adviser.

Role B

You are a top Russian army advisor. The very last thing Russia wants is an arms race in space. Russia has no money. Russia fears America may rule the universe and attack nations it dislikes. Russia hates war – millions of Russians died in WWII. You want to stop America.

Role C

You are a top American military adviser. You think America must rule space. America must continue to be the world’s peacekeeper. The only way to do this in future is from space. All future wars would be over quickly using space weapons.

Role D

You are an anti-war campaigner. You hate greedy weapons companies. You think Russia and America should destroy their WMD immediately. You believe America and Russia like war. You think money is better spent on reducing poverty. This will make the world safer.

Role E

You are an alien from outer space. You strongly disagree with Earth people dirtying your environment with their satellites, space stations and rockets. You cannot accept the idea of more junk in space. WMD are a no-no. Tell the Earthlings to stay out of space.

Change roles and repeat the role play.

After the role play(s), talk about whether you believe the arguments you gave while in your role? Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Russia warns against WMD in space

BNE: Russia has _____ countries against starting any star wars programs. Moscow said it would take _____ if any nation puts weapons in space. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov did not say the name of _____ country, but his message was clearly for the United States. Mr. Ivanov said Russia would _____ by _____ its own space weapons program.

Russia _____ George W. Bush's interest in America's "star wars" program, which was started _____ President Ronald Reagan. The plan to weaponize space has always been _____ to Moscow. Russia has warned America for many decades against any build-up of weapons in space. However, America _____ Outer Space Treaty, _____ weapons of mass destruction in space.

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 Russia's warning about WMD. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. SPACE: Write your ideas on how space might be used in the future. Show your ideas to your classmates in your next lesson. Talk about the likelihood of these ideas happening.

4. LETTER TO GEORGE W. BUSH: Write a letter to American President George W. Bush about the future of America's star wars program. Tell him whether he should go ahead with it or not. Give your reasons. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did your classmates write similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| a. warned | cautioned |
| b. programs | plans |
| c. steps | actions |
| d. particular | specific |
| e. retaliate | strike back |
| f. worried | concerned |
| g. former | ex |
| h. major | primary |
| i. build-up | increase |
| j. bans | forbids |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. warned all countries | against... |
| b. it would take | tit-for-tat steps |
| c. the name | of any particular country |
| d. his message was clearly | for the United States |
| e. retaliate by speeding | up its own space weapons program |
| f. former | U.S. President Ronald Reagan |
| g. The plan to weaponize | space |
| h. a major | concern |
| i. build-up | of weapons |
| j. America signed the | 1967 Outer Space Treaty |

GAP FILL:

Russia warns against WMD in space

BNE: Russia has **warned** all countries against **starting** any star wars programs. Moscow said it would **take** tit-for-tat steps if any nation puts **weapons** in space. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov did not say the name of any **particular** country, but his **message** was clearly for the United States. Mr. Ivanov said Russia would **retaliate** by speeding up its **own** space weapons program.

Russia is **worried** by George W. Bush's interest in America's "star wars" program, which was started by **former** U.S. President Ronald Reagan. The **plan** to weaponize space has always been a **major** concern to Moscow. Russia has warned America for many **decades** against any build-up of **weapons** in space. However, America **signed** the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which **bans** weapons of mass destruction in space.