

the ARTICLE (for teachers)

Fear-Mongering Hype

Take heed for the swine flu will annihilate the world by killing millions of people, paralyzing economies, and creating havoc! Since the initial outbreak, schools have closed, universities have canceled graduation ceremonies, and in Egypt, the health minister has ordered the slaughter of all pigs in the country. Face masks have done a brisk business everywhere too.

World health experts took prompt steps upon the initial discovery, offering dire warnings that it could become the next pandemic. They declared that up to two billion people could be sickened by the virus. Yet nothing has happened. There have been less than one hundred deaths worldwide, significantly fewer than the millions predicted in a possible worse-case scenario. In fact, there have been fewer deaths than in an annual flu season. And although health experts continue to state that the threat is very real, few people are listening.

If newspaper editorials and comments on the Internet provide any measure, then people have become fed up with the reports. "Crying wolf" and "hoax" are some of the milder terms out there, as everyone everywhere takes an increasingly unconcerned stance. Many are also critical of how the media banded about doom-and-gloom scenarios in what was otherwise a slow news cycle. In short, with little of interest to report, the media latched onto the swine flu to sell newspapers, magazines, and air time.

Of course, the media disagrees, as also do health experts. Both say that they acted promptly and properly at the discovery of the swine flu, taking the right steps to disseminate the message. It just so happens that the flu luckily hasn't manifested itself as the predicted pandemic. Perhaps, however, it all just amounts to fear-mongering hype.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in **red typeface** are the recommended vocabulary for this lesson.

VOCABULARY

Select one of the following vocabulary acquisition activities.

1: Vocabulary match: Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B.

a.	annihilate	q.	devastation
b.	havoc	r.	discuss
c.	dire	s.	fraud
d.	hoax	t.	destroy
e.	stance	u.	quick
f.	bandy	v.	terrible
g.	latch	w.	fasten
h.	prompt	x.	spread
i.	disseminate	y.	publicity
j.	hype	z.	point of view

2: Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word.

	dire	latched	hoax	hype	havoc
	stance	annihilate	disseminate	bandied	promptly
a.	Take heed for the swine flu will () the world.				
b.	It will kill millions of people, paralyze economies, and create ()!				
c.	World health experts offered () warnings that it could become the next pandemic.				
d.	"Crying wolf" and "()" are some of the milder terms out there.				
e.	Everyone everywhere has taken an increasingly unconcerned ().				
f.	Many are also critical of how the media () about doom-and-gloom scenarios.				
g.	The media () onto the swine flu to sell newspapers, magazines, and air time.				
h.	Both say that they acted () and properly at the discovery of the swine flu.				
i.	They took the right steps to () the message.				
j.	Perhaps the swine flu all just amounts to fear-mongering ().				

3: Define: Define each word, correctly pronounce it, explain the meaning and/or usage, and offer an example sentence to the class.

a.	annihilate	c.	dire	e.	stance	g.	latch	i.	disseminate
b.	havoc	d.	hoax	f.	bandy	h.	prompt	j.	hype

pre- or post-COMPREHENSION

1: Word Association: Brainstorm words associated with today's topic for two minutes. Present to the class.

2: Brainstorm Questions: Brainstorm questions that you would like to ask about today's topic. Answer the questions without looking at the article.

3: True or False?: Guess (before the article) or answer (after the article) whether the sentence is true or false. If false, correct the sentence.

a.	Schools have closed and university ceremonies have been canceled because of the swine flu.	T / F
b.	Up to two million people could be sickened by the virus.	T / F
c.	There have been more deaths from swine flu than the regular flu.	T / F
d.	Health experts think the media reported the swine flu because there wasn't any other big news.	T / F
e.	The health experts reacted quickly and correctly to the problem.	T / F

4: Questions: Answer the questions to check comprehension.

a.	What has happened in some parts of the world because of the swine flu?
b.	What did world health experts do?
c.	Why aren't many people listening to health experts now?
d.	According to some people's opinions, what did the media do?
e.	What do health experts and the media feel about their behavior?

5: Vocabulary: In pairs/groups, remember how the words were used in today's article.

a.	annihilate	c.	dire	e.	stance	g.	latched	i.	disseminate
b.	havoc	d.	hoax	f.	bandied	h.	promptly	j.	hype

6: Fragments: Remember how the fragments were used, and complete the sentence from today's article.

a.	Face masks have done a...
b.	There have been less than one hundred deaths worldwide, significantly fewer than...
c.	If newspaper editorials and comments on the Internet provide any measure, then people...
d.	In short, with little of interest to report, the media latched...
e.	Both say that they acted promptly and properly at the...

post-COMPREHENSION

1: Vocabulary: Circle any additional unknown words/phrases in the article. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the meanings. Present to the class.

2: Class Questions: Read through the article once more, and write down any questions that you would like to discuss in pairs/groups or as a class. Discuss.

3: Summarize: Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

4: Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

- | | |
|----|---|
| a. | Did you like this article? |
| b. | What was your general impression after reading this article? |
| c. | What do you think about the swine flu? Please explain. |
| d. | Is there any real possibility that millions of people could die from the swine flu? Why/not? |
| e. | What do you think about the media in general? Please explain. |
| f. | What do you think about the media and their reporting of the swine flu? Please explain. |
| g. | What threats are there to the future of humankind? Why do you think these are so dangerous? |
| h. | If the swine flu spread around the world in a worst-case scenario, how would people's lives change? |
| i. | If the swine flu spread around the world in a worst-case scenario, how would your life change? |
| j. | What can be done to prevent this virus and others from annihilating the modern world? |

5: Discuss: How would the world change if the swine flu spread around the world? Discuss what changes would occur in the following categories with a partner. Be sure to support your answers.

Economy:
Politics:
Work:
Education:

6: Google Search: Type "swine flu" into Google news and read additional articles on this topic. Discuss or write an essay about your findings.

STUDENT HANDOUT (the article)

Fear-Mongering Hype

Take heed for the swine flu will annihilate the world by killing millions of people, paralyzing economies, and creating havoc! Since the initial outbreak, schools have closed, universities have canceled graduation ceremonies, and in Egypt, the health minister has ordered the slaughter of all pigs in the country. Face masks have done a brisk business everywhere too.

World health experts took prompt steps upon the initial discovery, offering dire warnings that it could become the next pandemic. They declared that up to two billion people could be sickened by the virus. Yet nothing has happened. There have been less than one hundred deaths worldwide, significantly fewer than the millions predicted in a possible worse-case scenario. In fact, there have been fewer deaths than in an annual flu season. And although health experts continue to state that the threat is very real, few people are listening.

If newspaper editorials and comments on the Internet provide any measure, then people have become fed up with the reports. "Crying wolf" and "hoax" are some of the milder terms out there, as everyone everywhere takes an increasingly unconcerned stance. Many are also critical of how the media bandied about doom-and-gloom scenarios in what was otherwise a slow news cycle. In short, with little of interest to report, the media latched onto the swine flu to sell newspapers, magazines, and air time.

Of course, the media disagrees, as also do health experts. Both say that they acted promptly and properly at the discovery of the swine flu, taking the right steps to disseminate the message. It just so happens that the flu luckily hasn't manifested itself as the predicted pandemic. Perhaps, however, it all just amounts to fear-mongering hype.

Notes:

STUDENT HANDOUT (fill in the blank)

Fill in the blank with the correct word.

scenario	havoc	predicted	hype	promptly
hoax	experts	stance	bandied	dire
latched	disseminate	editorials	annihilate	sickened

Fear-Mongering Hype

Take heed for the swine flu will (a. _____) the world by killing millions of people, paralyzing economies, and creating (b. _____)! Since the initial outbreak, schools have closed, universities have canceled graduation ceremonies, and in Egypt, the health minister has ordered the slaughter of all pigs in the country. Face masks have done a brisk business everywhere too.

World health experts took prompt steps upon the initial discovery, offering (c. _____) warnings that it could become the next pandemic. They declared that up to two billion people could be (d. _____) by the virus. Yet nothing has happened. There have been less than one hundred deaths worldwide, significantly fewer than the millions predicted in a possible worse-case (e. _____). In fact, there have been fewer deaths than in an annual flu season. And although health (f. _____) continue to state that the threat is very real, few people are listening.

If newspaper (g. _____) and comments on the Internet provide any measure, then people have become fed up with the reports. "Crying wolf" and "(h. _____)" are some of the milder terms out there, as everyone everywhere takes an increasingly unconcerned (i. _____). Many are also critical of how the media (j. _____) about doom-and-gloom scenarios in what was otherwise a slow news cycle. In short, with little of interest to report, the media (k. _____) onto the swine flu to sell newspapers, magazines, and air time.

Of course, the media disagrees, as also do health experts. Both say that they acted (l. _____) and properly at the discovery of the swine flu, taking the right steps to (m. _____) the message. It just so happens that the flu luckily hasn't manifested itself as the (n. _____) pandemic. Perhaps, however, it all just amounts to fear-mongering (o. _____).

STUDENT HANDOUT (extended listening)

Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare your answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

Fear-Mongering Hype

a) _____, paralyzing economies, and creating havoc! Since the initial outbreak, schools have closed, universities have canceled graduation ceremonies, and in Egypt, the health minister has ordered the slaughter of all pigs in the country. Face masks have done a brisk business everywhere too.

b) _____, offering dire warnings that it could become the next pandemic. They declared that up to two billion people could be sickened by the virus. Yet nothing has happened. There have been less than one hundred deaths worldwide, significantly fewer than the millions predicted in a possible worse-case scenario. In fact, there have been fewer deaths than in an annual flu season. c) _____, few people are listening.

If newspaper editorials and comments on the Internet provide any measure, then people have become fed up with the reports. "Crying wolf" and "hoax" are some of the milder terms out there, as everyone everywhere takes an increasingly unconcerned stance. d) _____
_____. In short, with little of interest to report, the media latched onto the swine flu to sell newspapers, magazines, and air time.

Of course, the media disagrees, as also do health experts. e) _____
_____, taking the right steps to disseminate the message. It just so happens that the flu luckily hasn't manifested itself as the predicted pandemic. Perhaps, however, it all just amounts to fear-mongering hype.

STUDENT HANDOUT (notes)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary

1. Vocabulary Match:

a.	t	f.	z
b.	q	g.	r
c.	v	h.	w
d.	y	i.	u
e.	s	j.	x

2. Fill in the Blanks:

a.	annihilate	f.	bandied
b.	havoc	g.	latched
c.	dire	h.	promptly
d.	hoax	i.	disseminate
e.	stance	j.	hype

pre- or post-Comprehension

1. True or False:

a.	T
b.	F
c.	F
d.	F
e.	T

2. Fragments:

a.	brisk business everywhere too.
b.	the millions predicted in a possible worse-case scenario.
c.	have become fed up with the reports
d.	onto the swine flu to sell newspapers, magazines, and air time.
e.	discovery of the swine flu, taking the right steps to disseminate the message.

Student Handout

1. Fill in the Blanks

a.	annihilate	i.	stance
b.	havoc	j.	bandied
c.	dire	k.	latched
d.	sickened	l.	promptly
e.	scenario	m.	disseminate
f.	experts	n.	predicted
g.	editorials	o.	hype
h.	hoax		

2. Extended Listening

a.	Take heed for the swine flu will annihilate the world by killing millions of people
b.	World health experts took prompt steps upon the initial discovery
c.	And although health experts continue to state that the threat is very real
d.	Many are also critical of how the media bandied about doom-and-gloom scenarios in what was otherwise a slow news cycle
e.	Both say that they acted promptly and properly at the discovery of the swine flu