

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 1

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

Japan marks the 60th anniversary of the _____ of Hiroshima today. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and other world _____ will attend a memorial service in Hiroshima's Peace Park, close to the bomb's _____. The 70-minute-long ceremony will include a water-blessing _____ dedicated to those who _____ and dying of thirst after the bomb fell. Survivors and descendants of those who died will also attend the service. Strangely, August 6 is not a holiday in Hiroshima. Neither will Hiroshima's people stop their activities at 8.15 AM, _____ detonation, to reflect on the occasion.

The bomb was the _____ weapons on civilians. The blast and its aftermath wiped out half of Hiroshima's _____ scorching flash and completely _____ of the city's buildings and infrastructure. An estimated 140,000 people died instantly or in the following days. Three days later, a second bomb _____ a further 80,000 in Nagasaki. There are 40,000 survivors of the bomb alive today, with an average age of 71. Many commentators believe the attacks were _____ the end of World War II and avoid greater numbers being killed in a land invasion of Japan. Others consider them to be mankind's most evil _____.



Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. marks
2. dedicated
3. reflect
4. expedite
5. barbarity

Discussions

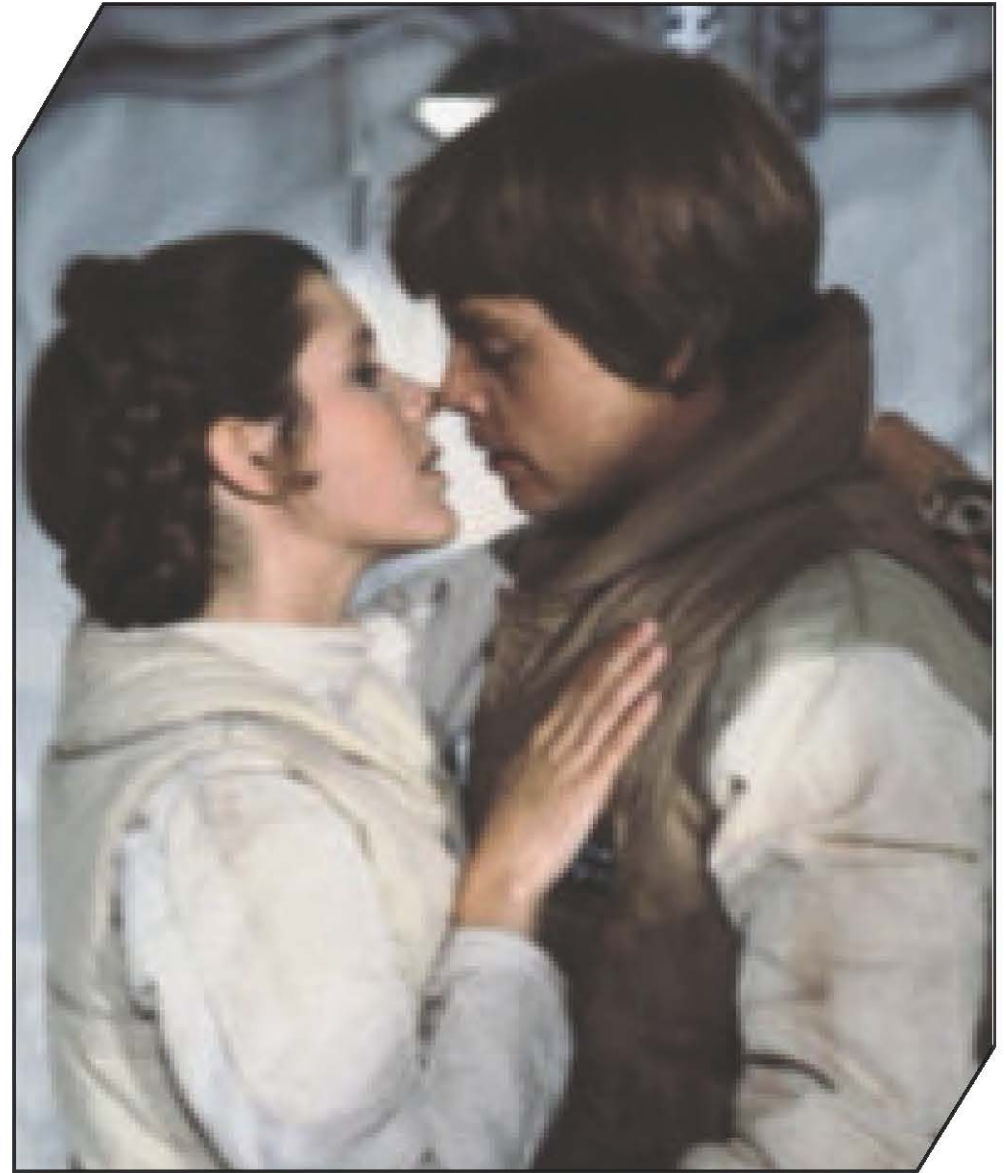
1. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
2. What does Hiroshima mean to you?
3. Do you think the bombings were necessary to end WWII early?
4. What are your images of the bombing of Hiroshima?
5. What do you think are the feelings of the people of Hiroshima today concerning the 60th anniversary?
6. Do you think nuclear weapons will ever be used again?
7. Do you think August 6 should be commemorated globally every year with a “World Hiroshima Day” holiday?
8. What kind of message would you leave at the Peace Park in Hiroshima?
9. Do you think all nuclear weapons should be scrapped?
10. Why do countries have or want nuclear weapons?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 2

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

A twin brother and sister who were _____ and later married each other without knowing _____ have had their marriage ended. The British courts decided the marriage was invalid because of their strong blood relationship. This _____ case happened because the pair were adopted by different sets of parents and their birth certificates _____ biological parents. Britain's Lord Alton immediately used the story to push for a law that allows children _____ insemination to be told about the method of their conception. It is not thought, however, that the British brother and sister were conceived _____. Their identities and details of their relationship and marriage, including how long they were married, have been kept secret.

Lord Alton is _____ in the law to make more information about parents available on birth certificates. He says people also have a right to know _____: "The state is _____. We are opening the door to more cases like this one. One of the most fundamental things of all is to know who you are. The issue here is about human rights. A birth certificate _____ of your true origin _____ in a very significant way," he said. He lamented the situation of the brother and sister whose marriage ended in such sadness, saying: "[They] met later in life and felt _____, and the judge had to deal with the consequences of the marriage that they entered _____ their separation."



Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. sibling
2. insemination
3. identities
4. falsifies
5. inevitable

Discussions

1. What springs to mind when you hear the word 'adoption'?
2. Is adoption common in your country?
3. What are the laws in your country concerning adoption, donor insemination, etc?
4. "One of the most fundamental things of all is to know who you are." What do you think of Lord Alton's quote?
5. How do you think the siblings feel now?
6. What do you think are the good and bad points about being a twin?
7. Was the British government right to end their marriage?
8. Do you agree with the system of donor insemination? Do you think it's wrong?
9. What do you think are the issues surrounding the separation?
10. Do you think children who are conceived via donor insemination should know everything?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 3

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

Divorce is bad for the environment. This is _____ research study _____ ecologists at Michigan State University in the USA and published in the journal 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences'. Researchers found that divorce has _____ negative impacts on the planet, including a higher demand for resources and a lower rate of efficiency _____ household resources. The research team analyzed data on married couples and their use of resources in 12 countries, including the USA, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Greece, Mexico and South Africa. Lead researchers Eunice Yu and Jianguo Liu discovered _____ smaller average household sizes, which resulted in a larger number of total households _____ demand for energy, water, and land.



In many countries around the world divorce _____ . “A married household actually uses resources more efficiently,” said Mr Liu. He added that people seemed surprised _____ first, and then after thinking about it, decided it was simple. He said: “People have been talking _____ the environment and combat climate change, but divorce is an overlooked factor that needs to be considered.” His report states that in

America in 2005, divorcees _____ than 73 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity and 627 billion gallons of water if they had stayed married. In percentage terms, divorcees used 42-61 percent more _____ compared with a married person. To help save natural resources, Yu and Liu recommended that governments consider the environmental _____ separation.

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. conclusion
2. impacts
3. analyzed
4. combat
5. overlooked

Discussions

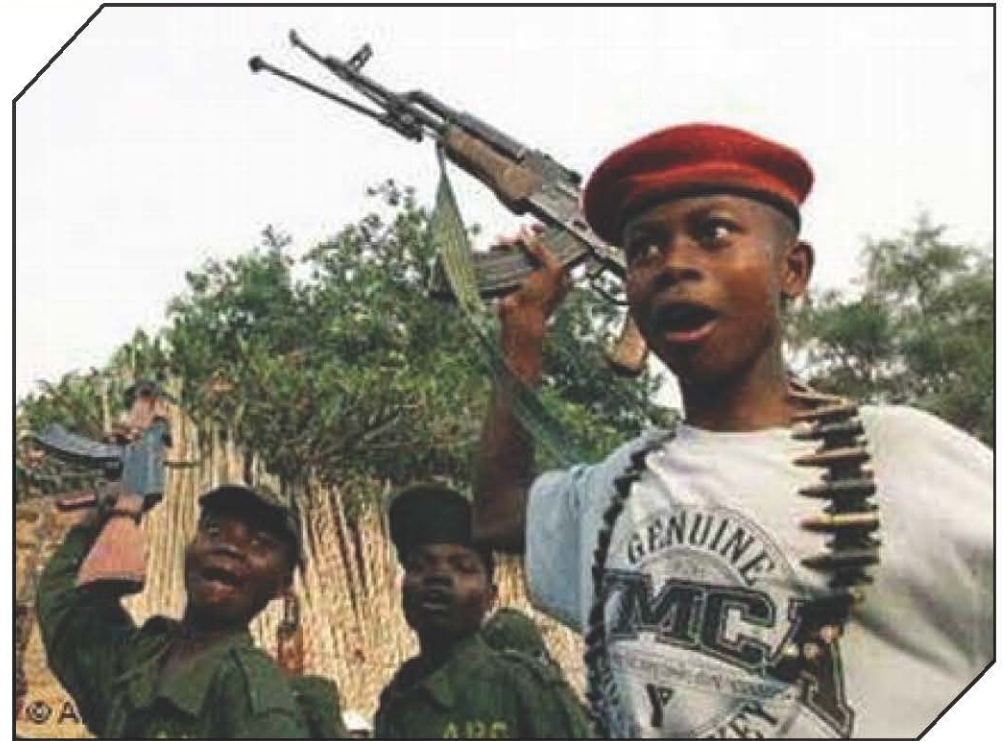
1. Do you think divorce is bad for the environment?
2. Do you think this study will be taken seriously?
3. Why would a married couple use resources more efficiently than two divorced people living alone?
4. Why do you think divorce has been overlooked as contributor to climate change for so long?
5. Do you think the research findings will encourage environmentally conscious single people to cohabit?
6. Is divorce a problem in your country?
7. Do you think religion should teach people about the environmental impact of divorce before getting married?
8. What other negative impacts do you think divorce might have on the environment?
9. Do you think more couples will consider the environment before splitting up and getting divorced?
10. Do you think governments should now seriously consider the environmental impact of divorce and separation?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 4

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

Nearly 60 nations have _____ children in their armies. A document, called the Paris Commitments, was signed in France by 58 countries, including Sudan, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These countries _____ for having child soldiers. Two states that the United Nations says uses child soldiers - Burma and the Philippines - did not attend the Paris meeting. All 27 nations of the European Union _____ the promise to help disarm and rehabilitate underage soldiers, and prevent their recruitment. The U.N. estimates a quarter of a million youngsters are involved _____ conflicts worldwide. As well as fighting, the kids serve as spies and sexual slaves. Girls _____ 40 percent of some armed groups. Their families often reject them when they return home.

The agreement is _____ laws of any of the 58 countries. However, it is an important step forward. France's Foreign Minister said the document was more than just "good words." He insisted, "_____ have great political value". A UNICEF spokesman stressed it is important that governments and not only NGOs are acting. The speaker _____ in Paris was Ishmael



Beah, a former child soldier in Sierra Leone. He picked up a gun when he was just 13, after his parents and brothers were killed in _____. He is now 26 and lives in New York. He said: "Taking a gun and shooting someone was as easy as drinking a glass of water." He reminded the world that: "No one is born violent. No child in Africa, Latin America or Asia _____."

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. pledged
2. commitments
3. rehabilitate
4. conflicts
5. insisted

Discussions

1. What do you know about child soldiers?
2. Do you think there will ever be wars in which children do not fight?
3. Do you think all countries will sign the agreement?
4. How do you think organizations rehabilitate child soldiers?
5. Why do you think army generals ask children to fight their wars?
6. Do you think children have a good time being soldiers?
7. What do you think of the “Paris Commitments” agreement?
8. Do you think Burma and the Philippines should be punished for not signing the agreement?
9. Do you think Ishmael Beah should become a UN ambassador?
10. If no one is born violent, do you think we can ever stop being violent?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 5

 Listen and fill in the blanks.

Researchers _____ Hollywood movies for the rise in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), unplanned or _____ and a culture in which drugs are seen as an acceptable way to relax. A team from two Australian universities, reporting in Britain's Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, analyzed _____ sex and drug use in the most popular movies of the last 20 years. Observers recorded data regarding "sexual activity, STD _____, birth control measures, drug use and _____ discussed _____". The report concluded: "Drug use, though infrequent, tended to be depicted positively. The social norm being presented is concerning given the HIV and illicit drug _____ in developing and industrialized countries."

The journal article _____ 2003 James Bond movie Die Another Day and the thriller Basic Instinct as key offenders. These movies often depicted unprotected sex _____ without any reference to condoms, AIDS or birth control. The Julia Roberts movie, Pretty Woman, was the only movie in the study _____. The study _____ regard given to the dangers of drug use. It revealed: "Movies with cannabis and other



non-injected _____ drugs...tended to portray their use positively and _____ consequences." Lead researcher Dr. Hasantha Gunasekera suggested Hollywood should be more responsible in its movie output, behaviors from which are seen, assimilated _____ billions around the world.

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. scant
2. incriminated
3. single out
4. cannabis
5. relax

Discussions

1. Are you surprised at anything you read in the article?
2. Why do you think researchers found no movies that showed drug use negatively?
3. Do you think Hollywood's producers and directors should be more careful when portraying the use of drugs?
4. Do you think there should be greater censorship of explicit scenes?
5. Does Hollywood have a social responsibility?
6. Do the movies from your country show unsafe sex and drug use?
7. Do you think movies could be used to combat HIV/AIDS?
8. Do you think Hollywood movies should educate people about the dangers of unsafe sex and drugs?
9. Why are drug using, smoking, womanizing men shown as "heroes" in movies?
10. Do you think the US Government should regulate the content of Hollywood movies to ensure a healthier society and world?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 6

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

Spain has _____ to legalize same sex marriages. It becomes the fourth country _____ after Belgium, Canada and the Netherlands. The new law is very popular with the Spanish people: _____ of Spaniards support legalizing gay marriage. However, the Catholic Church is very angry that the law was passed. It tried very _____ the legalizing of same sex marriages. The new law gives homosexual partners _____ as heterosexual ones. They will soon be able to _____ and have inheritance rights.

The vote in the _____ Spanish Congress passed smoothly. Spain's Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero _____. Supporters of the bill _____ when they heard the news. They _____ and kissed each other outside the Congress building, while some cried with happiness.



Fernando Martinez was smiling _____. He said: The unfairness has come to an end. Society, at last, accepts us for who we are. We are normal people who want to _____." The first marriages of gay couples _____ July 15.

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. heterosexual
2. grinning
3. inequality
4. thrilled
5. at last

Discussions

1. Did the headline make you want to read the story?
2. What do you think about the words “homosexual”, “gay” and “lesbian”?
3. Have you ever been to a gay bar or gay festival?
4. Do you agree with same sex marriages?
5. Do you think your country will accept same sex marriages?
6. Do you think gay people should have the same rights as straight people?
7. Do you think gay couples should be allowed to adopt children?
8. What would you think if your child wanted a same sex marriage?
9. Do you think attending a same sex wedding would be different from attending a wedding between a man and a woman?
10. If a married gay man became President of the USA, would his partner be the “First Gentleman”?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 7

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

A major new _____, published in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, _____ alcohol and tobacco are more dangerous than many highly illegal drugs. They are _____ 10 most dangerous substances in the study. Researchers believe British law should classify alcohol and tobacco the same _____ heroin and cocaine. Head researcher Professor David Nutt of Britain's Bristol University suggested a new classification of harmful substances. He said it _____ actual risks posed to society. Professor Nutt said the new system was necessary in Britain as the existing one was out of date: "The current drug system _____ arbitrary," he said. He added there was _____ excluding alcohol and tobacco as serious drugs.

Professor Nutt and his colleagues used three factors _____ harmful a drug is: the physical harm to the user, how addictive the drug is, and the impact _____. The researchers were experts in drug addiction, lawyers and police officers with scientific or medical backgrounds and doctors. _____ the dangers of alcohol and tobacco. They ranked alcohol as the fifth and tobacco as the ninth most harmful drugs. Heroin and cocaine



finished top, while marijuana was eleventh and Ecstasy finished _____ 20 drugs. The latter two are illegal in Britain and America, while alcohol and tobacco are legal. Tobacco causes 40 percent of all hospital illnesses, while alcohol is _____ half of all visits to hospital emergency rooms. They also harm society _____. They damage families and stretch police services.

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. classify
2. impact
3. specialists
4. latter
5. major

Discussions

1. What did you think when you read the headline? Do you think alcohol is harmful?
2. Do you agree with the report that alcohol is more harmful than drugs like marijuana?
3. Do you think all addictive drugs (including caffeine) should be banned?
4. Would your life change if tobacco and alcohol were illegal?
5. Do you agree alcohol is OK because it is an important part of some country's cultures?
6. In what ways alcohol is harmful to society?
7. Do you think governments should make marijuana legal?
8. Do you think hospital patients should pay higher fees if they drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes?
9. Would your government be popular if it banned alcohol and tobacco?
10. Should alcohol and tobacco be banned or more heavily taxed?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 8

 Listen and fill in the blanks.

Love conquers all. This is _____ the former heaviest man in the world. Mexican Manuel Uribe used to be the world's most overweight person. He was in the Guinness Book of Records in 2006 _____ human weight record. Special weighing scales showed _____. He was _____ could not leave his room. He spent his whole life living on his bed, eating huge meals and watching TV. He decided _____ and that he wanted to change his life. He also wanted to marry his longtime girlfriend Claudia Solis. Uribe _____ and lost almost half his body weight. He lost a whopping 250kg and has slimmed down to a lighter 310kg. He still _____ go before he can once again lead a normal life.

The secret to 43-year-old Uribe's _____ love for his fiancée Claudia. The two plan to marry on October 26 in his hometown of Monterrey. Manuel said he _____ love of his life. He said she encouraged and supported him _____ weight. After they got engaged two years ago, Uribe promised Claudia he would get _____ for their wedding day. He went



on a diet called the Zone Diet, a special combination of carbohydrates and proteins. His diet was created and supervised by a team _____ obesity specialists. He is still too big to walk on his own and said his dream _____ walk again. Manuel told reporters that he will have a big wedding, but the reception would have a “low-calorie banquet”. He _____ no wedding cake for him.

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. conquers
2. enormous
3. owed
4. specialists
5. banquet

Discussions

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. Do you think Manuel is lucky to have Claudia?
3. What questions would you like to ask Manuel and Claudia?
4. What do you think life would be like to weigh 560kg?
5. Are you happy with your weight?
6. Have you ever been on a diet?
7. Do you believe love conquers all?
8. Have you ever decided “enough was enough” and changed your life?
9. To whom do you owe a lot?
10. What do you think is the secret to success?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 9

 Listen and fill in the blanks.

Japan _____ used to many painful social trends in the past six decades. Many traditions, which for a thousand years bound Japanese society tightly together, have _____ the end of World War II. The “job for life” system, which traditionally _____ with guaranteed lifetime employment, proved unfeasible in the global economy; Japan’s _____ school children are rebelling; and divorce, once considered _____, has been slowly increasing. A boom in the rate of divorce may soon be _____ trend. New pension laws are being passed by the government that _____ half of their husband’s pension once their marriage has finished.

Many women have _____ the introduction of the new legislation since it was first proposed four years ago. A _____ 42,000 wives may now apply for a divorce. It seems economic concerns are overtaking any feelings _____ marital breakdown. Women often stayed in unhappy marriages fearing they would be unable to support themselves financially _____. However, changes in society have made divorce much _____ than in the past. Greater gender equality means divorce is now seen as a sign of a woman’s independence. Teacher Makiko Inoue got divorced last year. She welcomed the new laws, saying they _____ women. Conversely, married men may not feel as positively about the new regulations.



Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. bound
2. unfeasible
3. obedient
4. breakdown
5. liberate

Discussions

1. Do you think marriage is forever?
2. What is your image of marriage in Japan?
3. How easy do you think it should be to get a divorce?
4. Would you feel shame if you got divorced?
5. Is divorce something society can stop?
6. What do you think of religions that do not allow divorce?
7. What do you think it's like to be trapped in an unhappy marriage because you can't afford to live alone?
8. Is divorce a real taboo in your culture?
9. Do you think it's fair that wives will be entitled to half of their husband's pension?
10. What are the divorce laws like in your country?

ISSUES: NEWS ARTICLE 10

 *Listen and fill in the blanks.*

Most of the world's Internet users believe Internet _____ right. This is according to a new poll conducted for the BBC. A _____ 27,000 adults in 26 different countries found four out of five people believed access to the World Wide Web was a right everyone in the world _____. The chief of the International Telecommunication Union, Dr. Hamadoun Toure, told the BBC World Service: "The right to communicate _____. The Internet is the most powerful potential source of enlightenment ever created." Dr. Toure believes online access _____ everywhere, just like roads and water. In some countries, this has already happened. Finland and Estonia have _____ is a human right.

The survey also showed how the Internet _____ a vital part of our life, all across the world. Over 75 per cent of Japanese, Mexican and Russian people said they could _____. It is easy to see why. Almost everything we do in our life today, from communication, study, _____, needs the Internet. Without access to the Web, many people



would feel helpless and powerless. Almost 80 per cent of _____ survey believe the Web had a positive impact, with nearly four fifths saying they have greater freedom. Other people were worried about _____ the Internet. One big surprise was that the majority of Germans felt it was not safe _____ their opinions online.

Vocabulary

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. chief
2. potential
3. vital
4. leisure
5. impact

Discussions

1. How important is the Internet in your life?
2. Do you think Internet access is now a human right?
3. Do you think people in different countries have different views of the Internet?
4. In which areas of your life is the Internet vital?
5. How would your life be different without the Internet?
6. How has the Internet changed the world?
7. How would you feel about going on vacation for a month to a place with no Internet?
8. What are the dangers of the Internet?
9. What will the Internet look like in 10, 20, 50 years from now?
10. What have you learned from the Internet?