

NEWS ENGLISH LESSONS.com

Chile quake made our days shorter

MANY FLASH AND ONLINE ACTIVITIES FOR THIS LESSON, PLUS A LISTENING, AT:

<http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

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3rd March, 2010

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

The tragic earthquake that killed hundreds of people in Chile on February the 27th probably shortened our days. The huge 8.8 magnitude quake was one of the most powerful ever recorded. Experts say it was 500 times bigger than the one that hit Haiti in January. Richard Gross, a NASA scientist, believes the Chile trembler changed the Earth's position. He said our planet's axis moved sideways by 8cm. This shift is enough to make Earth spin faster, which would cut the length of a day by 1.26 microseconds. More than 700 people died in the terrible natural disaster. Aid agencies say over 2 million have been affected. Half a million homes have been damaged or destroyed. The NASA statistic is one that will cause people less concern than the ones affecting human lives. The figure is tiny – our days are now 0.00000126 seconds shorter than they were before the earthquake. It would take nearly a million days for us to lose a whole second. Mr Gross said he is not sure if his calculations are correct because one-millionth of a second is too short to measure.

See more from Richard Gross here:

<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/features.cfm?feature=2504>.

PHRASE MATCH

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

Match the following phrases from the article.

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. tragic | a. quake |
| 2. 8.8 | b. spin faster |
| 3. the one that hit | c. moved sideways |
| 4. changed the Earth's | d. magnitude earthquake |
| 5. our planet's axis | e. Haiti |
| 6. enough to make Earth | f. position |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. the terrible natural | a. concern |
| 2. Aid | b. a second |
| 3. Half a million homes have | c. disaster |
| 4. cause people less | d. been damaged |
| 5. one-millionth of | e. measure |
| 6. too short to | f. agencies |

LISTENING GAP FILL

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

The _____ that killed hundreds of people in Chile on February the 27th probably _____. The huge 8.8 magnitude quake was one of the most powerful ever recorded. Experts say it was 500 times _____ that hit Haiti in January. Richard Gross, a NASA scientist, believes the Chile trembler changed _____. He said _____ moved sideways by 8cm. This shift is enough to make Earth spin faster, which would _____ a day by 1.26 microseconds.

More than 700 people died in the _____. Aid agencies say over 2 million _____. Half a million homes have been damaged or destroyed. The NASA statistic is one that will cause _____ than the ones affecting human lives. The figure is tiny - _____ 0.00000126 seconds shorter than they were before the earthquake. It _____ a million days for us to lose a whole second. Mr Gross said he is not sure if his calculations are correct because one-millionth of a second is _____.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

The (1) _____ earthquake that killed hundreds of people in Chile on February the 27th probably (2) _____ our days. The huge 8.8 magnitude quake was one of the most powerful ever recorded. Experts say it was 500 times bigger than the one that (3) _____ Haiti in January. Richard Gross, a NASA scientist, believes the Chile trembler changed the Earth's position. He said our planet's axis moved (4) _____ by 8cm. This shift is enough to make Earth spin faster, which would cut the (5) _____ of a day by 1.26 microseconds.

More than 700 people died in the terrible natural disaster. Aid (6) _____ say over 2 million have been affected. Half a million homes have been damaged or destroyed. The NASA statistic is one that will (7) _____ people less concern than the ones affecting human lives. The figure is tiny – our days are now 0.00000126 seconds shorter than they (8) _____ before the earthquake. It would take nearly a million days for us to lose a (9) _____ second. Mr Gross said he is not sure if his (10) _____ are correct because one-millionth of a second is too short to measure.

Put the correct words from this table into the article.

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) tragedy | (b) tragic | (c) tragically |
| 2. | (a) short | (b) shortens | (c) shortened |
| 3. | (a) hit | (b) smack | (c) punched |
| 4. | (a) side | (b) sideways | (c) sided |
| 5. | (a) long | (b) lengthen | (c) length |
| 6. | (a) agent | (b) agency | (c) agencies |
| 7. | (a) cause | (b) course | (c) coarse |
| 8. | (a) was | (b) is | (c) were |
| 9. | (a) whole | (b) hole | (c) wholly |
| 10. | (a) calculate | (b) calculations | (c) calculated |

SPELLING

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

Spell the jumbled words (from the text) correctly.

Paragraph 1

1. tgairc earthquake
2. The huge 8.8 magnitude keaqu
3. 500 meist bigger
4. changed the Earth's oinptois
5. make Earth spin faetrs
6. cut the englth of a day

Paragraph 2

7. terrible rltnaau disaster
8. Aid sieneagc
9. agdeamd or destroyed
10. ryelna a million days
11. his calculations are ccrerot
12. too short to aesruem

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () days. The huge 8.8 magnitude quake was one of the most powerful ever recorded. Experts say it was 500 times
- () people less concern than the ones affecting human lives. The figure is tiny – our days are now 0.00000126
- () More than 700 people died in the terrible natural disaster. Aid agencies say over 2 million have been
- () second. Mr Gross said he is not sure if his calculations are correct because one-millionth of a second is too short to measure.
- () bigger than the one that hit Haiti in January. Richard Gross, a NASA scientist, believes the Chile trembler
- () to make Earth spin faster, which would cut the length of a day by 1.26 microseconds.
- () seconds shorter than they were before the earthquake. It would take nearly a million days for us to lose a whole
- () affected. Half a million homes have been damaged or destroyed. The NASA statistic is one that will cause
- () changed the Earth's position. He said our planet's axis moved sideways by 8cm. This shift is enough
- (**1**) The tragic earthquake that killed hundreds of people in Chile on February the 27th probably shortened our

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

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With a partner, put the words back into the correct order.

1. tragic that hundreds The earthquake killed.

2. of One recorded ever powerful most the.

3. times bigger than the one that hit Haiti It was 500

4. Earth's position The . Chile trembler changed the

5. day a of length the Cut microseconds 1.26 by.

6. died People disaster natural terrible the in.

7. been have homes million a Half damaged.

8. shorter days seconds Our now 0.00000126 are.

9. sure calculations not his correct is if are He.

10. short too is second a of millionth - One measure to.

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

WRITING

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100303-chile.html>

Write about earthquakes for 10 minutes. Show your partner your paper. Correct each other's work.

[illegible]

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 about earthquakes. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about earthquakes. Include imaginary interviews with two people who survived the quake. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

4. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to NASA scientist Richard Gross. Ask him three questions about earthquakes. Give him three of your opinions on the shortened day. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner will answer the questions you asked.