

Drones

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. How does a drone differ from a warplane?
2. What are drones used for?
3. Is the use of drones a form of terrorism?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| ___ 1. surveillance | a) a person who is not a member of the police or armed forces |
| ___ 2. capture | b) not physical |
| ___ 3. civilian | c) close observation (sometimes spying) |
| ___ 4. terrorizing | d) an everyday person |
| ___ 5. whiplash | e) movement from one thing to the next |
| ___ 6. transition | f) to take a person or thing into one's own possession |
| ___ 7. virtual | g) causing fear and great stress |
| ___ 8. assess | h) relating to or in one's own country |
| ___ 9. domestic | i) a sudden jerking motion in a new direction |
| ___ 10. average Joe | j) to evaluate something |

Reading

DRONES

Robot assassin or modern air patrol?

1. Drones are unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) operated from the ground. Some drones are used for **surveillance**. Others are armed for targeted attacks. Several countries have military drones in use, including the US, the UK, Israel, and China. The US has hundreds of drones in active use, and drone technology is spreading fast. When an American drone was **captured** in Iran in 2011, many feared the technology would be copied. This is called reverse-engineering.
2. Are targeted killings by drones legal? Many people don't think so. A recent study suggests that drones kill far more innocent **civilians** than targeted leaders. One UN investigator believes that drone strikes are a war crime. He believes that terrorists should be captured, not murdered.
3. What does it feel like to live under drones? Citizens in countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan say they live in fear of drones. They describe the **terrorizing** sound that drones make above their homes and businesses. Drones have powerful weapons that leave homes, buildings, and victims unidentifiable. In Pakistan, many people say they are anti-American because they oppose America's use of drones.
4. What about the drone pilots on the ground? Are these true combat pilots? Psychologists say that these pilots experience an odd form of trauma called **whiplash transition**. They go from a **virtual** war zone to regular family life with no time in between.
5. Not all drones are used in warfare. Drones are sometimes used to **assess** damage after natural disasters. In 2011, drones were used to assess radiation levels after the Fukushima power plant accident. Police forces are experimenting with drones for **domestic** use. Drones may be policing the skies above your home already. What happens when an **average Joe** can build a drone that interrupts a commercial flight?

"A man on a mission is far different from a drone on a deadline."

—Rheta Grimsley Johnson, reporter

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What does *UAV* stand for?
2. Why does the reading mention Iran?
3. What does the reading say about the sound that drones make?
4. Why are many people in Pakistan anti-American?
5. What were drones used for after the nuclear disaster in Japan in 2011?

Vocabulary Review

A. Chunking

Create six words or expressions by pairing the words that are commonly found together in English. Then write a sentence for each example.

Word List

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| • American | • camera | • innocent | • surveillance |
| • anti- | • civilian | • Joe | • war |
| • average | • disaster | • natural | • zone |

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

Vocabulary Review cont.

B. Odd One Out

Choose the word or phrase that does NOT belong in the group.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. a) assess | 2. a) scare | 3. a) motion | 4. a) take | 5. a) virtual |
| b) determine | b) worry | b) whiplash | b) capture | b) movement |
| c) unidentifiable | c) terrorize | c) sudden | c) surveillance | c) transition |
| d) evaluate | d) domestic | d) civilian | d) possess | d) change |

Discussion

1. Will domestic drones create a surveillance society? If yes, when?
2. When do you think pilotless planes will be used for passenger flights?
3. Drones as small as birds are being developed in some countries. What do you think these will be used for?
4. What will happen if the paparazzi* start using drones?

***Paparazzi**

Paparazzi refers to people who spy on celebrities and take photographs for gossip media.

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

DRONES

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2. Are targeted killings by drones legal? Many people don't think so. A recent study suggests that drones kill far more innocent _____ than targeted leaders. One UN investigator believes that drone strikes are a war crime. He believes that _____ should be captured, not murdered.
3. What does it feel like to live under drones? Citizens in countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan say they live in fear of drones. They describe the _____ sound that drones make above their homes and businesses. Drones have powerful weapons that leave homes, buildings, and victims unidentifiable. In Pakistan, many people say they are anti-American because they _____ America's use of drones.
4. What about the drone pilots on the ground? Are these true combat pilots? Psychologists say that these pilots experience an odd form of trauma called _____. They go from a _____ war zone to regular family life with no time in between.
5. Not all drones are used in warfare. Drones are sometimes used to _____ damage after natural disasters. In 2011, drones were used to assess radiation levels after the Fukushima power plant accident. Police forces are experimenting with drones for _____ use. Drones may be policing the skies above your home already. What happens when an _____ can build a drone that interrupts a commercial flight?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about the controversial use of drones in warfare and the potential for domestic use in the future.

TEACHING TIPS:

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, drones, drone, surveillance, military, war

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. c | 3. a | 5. i | 7. b | 9. h |
| 2. f | 4. g | 6. e | 8. j | 10. d |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

1. UAV stands for “unmanned aerial vehicle.”
2. The reading mentions Iran because Iran captured a US drone in 2011 and people feared the technology would be copied.
3. The reading says the sound of drones is terrorizing to civilians below.
4. Many people in Pakistan are anti-American because they disagree with the US drone program.
5. Drones were used to assess radiation levels after the nuclear disaster in Japan in 2011.

Vocabulary Review

A. CHUNKING

Answers for sentences will vary. Have more advanced students write a short story, dream, or fictional news article using all six pairings. This can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. anti-American | 4. surveillance camera |
| 2. average Joe | 5. war zone |
| 3. innocent civilian | 6. natural disaster |

B. ODD ONE OUT

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. c | 2. d | 3. d | 4. c | 5. a |
|------|------|------|------|------|

Discussion

Answers will vary.
Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Listening

1. surveillance, captured
2. civilians, terrorists
3. terrorizing, oppose
4. whiplash transition, virtual
5. assess, domestic, average Joe