

Free Sample: Current Events English Course 2019

Original article:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/04/15/712653034/no-fake-drugs-more-jobs-for-youth-end-child-sexual-abuse-online-a-vision-for-203>

Hello students! It's Shayna from EspressoEnglish.net, and today's lesson is a free sample of our new course called Current Events English. The lessons in this course are based on real news articles, and you can find the link to today's article in the video description.

If you want 30 more lessons like this one, come sign up for the Current Events English Course! [Click on the sign up link under this video to join.](#)

This article focuses on five entrepreneurs who recently received investments to continue their work on solving social problems. The introduction says "they are tackling a range of daunting issues" - the word **daunting** describes something that makes you feel afraid or discouraged. So daunting issues are big, difficult, intimidating issues. And this expression, to **tackle an issue**, means to work on it.

One of the issues mentioned is counterfeit drugs. **Counterfeit** means fake or false, so a counterfeit drug is something that pretends to be a real medicine, but in reality is not.

All the entrepreneurs featured in the article are hoping to **scale up**. This phrasal verb means to increase size and activity, often of a business or organization.

The first problem described is unemployment, especially in countries with a **bulging** population of young people. Bulging means expanding and getting bigger, and implies that this growth causes the situation to be uncomfortable because the environment can't support so much growth.

In South Africa, many young people leave school but can't find a job, and they end up in a "**no man's land**." This expression refers to an area of uncertainty, where there's no clear direction or plan.

So this organization is an employment accelerator, and it helps prepare unemployed youth to get jobs. They become eligible for apprenticeships. **Eligible** means qualified and available to be selected, and **apprenticeships** are jobs in which you are also receiving training from more experienced workers.

When a participant in this program signs up for classes but doesn't **show up** (doesn't appear or attend), this is a red flag. **A red flag** is a warning sign, a small indication that a bigger problem exists.

The article says this program **appeals to** both youth and companies. **Appeals to** in this case means it is attractive and interesting. If something appeals to you, then you have the interest and desire to participate in it.

Another big issue nowadays involves mental health crises. **Crises** is the plural form of crisis, meaning a tense, difficult, or emergency situation. Note the different pronunciation of crisis, singular, and crises, plural.

Sometimes it's hard to make a phone call to get help with your mental health, so another entrepreneur created a help center where you can communicate by text message. This has become very popular among young people. The **founder** (creator) of this program also hopes to collect data to see if public/famous tragedies **trigger** mental health crises. The verb trigger means to cause or activate.

The next issue described in the article is a problem in African pharmacies, where medication is sometimes **prohibitively expensive**. This expression means it costs so much that it's impossible for most people to buy it.

The article says, "Africa has many mom-and-pop stores that can't order in big quantities as chain pharmacies do." A **mom-and-pop store** is a small store owned by a family, whereas the word **chain** refers to a large company with multiple stores in various locations.

A company called mPharma is aiming to solve this problem – it buys large quantities of medicine at good prices, then works with the small pharmacies to distribute and sell the medicines at fair prices.

Speaking of medicine, the next company profiled in the article helps certify that medicines - as well as other products such as seeds, auto parts, and cosmetics - are genuine and are not knockoffs. A **knockoff** is a fake product that looks like the real thing. If farmers purchase fake or poor-quality seeds, their **crops** can fail. The word crops refers to plants that are grown for food. This system for verifying authenticity and quality is now being used in 12 countries.

Finally we have a group that's helping eliminate images of child abuse online. Not only does their software remove these images, it also helps law enforcement find children who may be victims of trafficking. **Human trafficking** is the activity illegally transporting people, often using them for forced labor or sex.

This group is aiming to eradicate abusive images - to **eradicate** means to completely eliminate or destroy. They also try to reach people who are looking for abusive pictures online, and direct them to **confidential** counseling so they can get help. The word **confidential** means it is done in secret.

All these companies and organizations are certainly working hard to make the world a better place.

That's all for today! Now you can download the vocabulary exercise to review and practice all the words you learned from this article. If you want to receive more lessons like this one, come [sign up for our Current Events English Course](#).

Starting on May 1st, you'll receive one news-based lesson per day for 30 days. It's a great opportunity to expand your vocabulary by learning about topics that are relevant right now.

Click on the link in the video description to join me in Current Events English. Thanks for watching, and I hope you enjoyed the lesson!

Vocabulary Exercise

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word from the box.

Be careful – four words are not used!

| | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| daunting | no man's land | crises | trafficking |
| tackle | eligible | triggered | eradicate |
| counterfeit | showed up | mom-and-pop | confidential |
| scale up | a red flag | chain | |
| bulging | appeal to | crops | |

1. A job where I would work from home doesn't _____ to me - I think I'd feel lonely all day.
2. Cashiers often check \$100 bills to make sure they're not _____.
3. Doctors and nurses in the emergency room are well-trained in dealing with medical _____.
4. I won't have time to go out this weekend - there are a bunch of projects around the house I need to _____.
5. If a house has cracks in the walls, that could be _____ that something's wrong with the foundation.
6. My favorite pizzeria is a _____ place around the corner, owned by an Italian family.
7. She always brings too much stuff - her suitcase is _____ with clothes and shoes.
8. Sorry, you can't use my work computer because there's _____ company information on it.
9. That's a pretty _____ hike - five hours up a steep mountain.
10. Most of the country's land is used for agriculture; a wide variety of _____ are grown here.

11. This new face cream will _____ wrinkles and make you look 20 years younger!
12. You need ten years' experience to be _____ for a promotion to management.
13. There are currently 10 children in the tutoring program; we'd like to _____ to 30 next year.
14. I invited 15 people to the party, but only 6 _____.

Writing Exercise

Describe a major problem in the world today that you think needs to be solved. Why do you think this issue is important? What are two or three ideas you have for possible solutions?

Send your text to help@espressoenglish.net for feedback and correction!

Answers

1. appeal
2. counterfeit
3. crises
4. tackle
5. a red flag
6. mom-and-pop
7. bulging
8. confidential
9. daunting
10. crops
11. eradicate
12. eligible
13. scale up
14. showed up