Hello everyone. Nice to see you (all) again. Hope everyone is in good shape. Now, with no further delay I will show you what we are going to talk about today.

Click road sign
Any ideas what it will be about?
S answer(s)
This road signs signals any sort of danger, so I suppose... we will be talking about road safety.
We will but not today... We will deal with something much more general...

Click to show text
Does that remind you of what we talked about a few weeks back?
S answer(s)
Yes, we talked about all the dangers that threaten us. Or those we are creating for ourselves...
Good, we’ll see how much you remember. I know you like being tested. Here we go again.

Click to next slide.

Remember?

Click for volcano and Greek island.
Right. What do these pictures remind you of? Do you remember what happened in both cases?
S answer(s)
Good, how about these now?
Click for picture of fault and San Francisco quake.
S answer(s)
Places, dates, damage, etc...
Click for picture of asteroid
Wow! What a sight! What does it show?
S answer(s)
And do you remember what the consequences of such a cataclysm would be?
S answer(s)
Click to show huge tidal wave
Exactly and this is going to serve as an easy transition to the next slide.

Click to next blank slide
Now when you think you're safe and comfy relaxing on a tropical beach unexpected disasters can strike! Can you describe what’s happening here? Do you think people look as if they were aware of the danger?

Do you remember hearing about a tremendous tsunami in recent years? Where did it occur? How about the toll? (casualties).

Can you identify what part of the globe we are showing? Now what was the cause for this huge tidal wave? An asteroid?

Yes, look where it started and how the wave spread. Can you explain what happened now? And do you know why the wave gets so big?

Look at these pictures, it might help you. It seems the waves accelerate and get bigger and bigger as the ocean floor rises. Very good. And do we have a way of preventing these catastrophes?

Not really. What about this thing then?

This buoy is part of a worldwide system that now monitors earthquakes and tsunamis so that people may have time to take shelter if such things happen.

All right, let’s move on to other things...
Do you know what a dam is?

What if I show you this map and the red spot?

Click for map
Does it help?

(A barrier that is built across a river)

I know you love geography as much as I do. 😊
Can you name the states shown on the map?
And the name of the river on which the dam is built?

The Colorado River.
North: west → east: California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado
South: west → east: California, Arizona, New Mexico

Very good. Note that in British English we say the River Colorado, the River Thames, etc…

Now, this is what the river looked like in the 1920s.

What do you call such a landscape?

A canyon?
Yes, and what do you know about the area the river goes through?

Mostly desert?
Yes indeed.

Click for picture of dam.
Now why would people build a dam in the middle of a desert?

Generate electricity
Irrigation …

Do you have any idea of the size of this dam? It looks rather impressive to me.

Well here’s some information about the dam.
Read it carefully. Make sure you understand everything. Ask me if you don’t.

All right, this is a very famous spot for tourists nowadays. Imagine you are a guide and use the information to present the dam.

Do you know what famous city you can find not far from the dam? In fact it provides electricity for this very city.
S answer(s)  
Reno? Las Vegas?

T Now personally I wouldn’t care too much living by a dam. How about you? Upstream or downstream? Why?

S answer(s)  
T Let’s see if your fears are founded.  
Click to next slide

Slide 5  
All of a sudden, in the middle of the night  

T What am I going to show you now?

S answer(s)  
Click for picture of Malpasset dam  
Describe the two pictures of the same dam and explain what has happened. What does the title suggest?

S answer(s)  
T Here is more information about this catastrophe, which occurred half a century ago.  
Click for information box  
T Now, please use the information to report on the events. Explain why there were so many fatalities.

S answer(s)  
Click to next slide

Slide 6  
Sky high

T Where would you like to live?  
In a tower block? (block of flats)?  
In a regular house? Explain why?

S answer(s)  
If you like living in a flat/apartment, how high would you like it to be? Would you prefer to live in the lower or the higher storeys? Why?

S answer(s)  
Click to show Babel tower  
T Is this painting familiar?  
Even if it isn’t, you can describe what it represents, can’t you?

S answer(s)  
An enormous tower that seems to be reaching to the sky. It’s still under construction yet and one may wonder how long it’ll take to complete it.  
What shows that it’s a gigantic undertaking?

S answer(s)  
The size of the ships below?  
Quite.  
Click to show box and name of tower.
Now does that ring a bell?

According to the biblical account, a united humanity of the generations following the Great Flood, speaking a single language and migrating from the east, came to the land of Shinar, where they resolved to build a city with a tower "with its top in the heavens"... But God is said to have felt insulted by the men's pretensions to reach as high as HE lived. So he came down to earth and confounded their language so that they could no longer understand one another, and then they abandoned the city and the tower and left in every direction and scattered around the earth.

Good. This is probably why you speak French and I speak English... Don’t you think? 😊

Do you think the myth of this tower has died? Or is it still very much alive? Can you prove it?

All you have to do is look at all the high rises and sky scrapers in the world.

Look at this picture now, doesn't it bear any resemblance with the previous one? If so which one?

Click to Burj Khalifa

Like the Babel Tower it seems to get thinner and thinner as it rises higher and higher. The higher it reaches the thinner it gets.

Now this is no legend. The tower does exist. It is 160 storeys high. Do you know where it is located?

Would you like to live at the top of such a building? Why/not?

I'm afraid of heights.

Besides, these buildings are so showy that they always end up making some people envious. Some even dream of destroying them.
Slide 7  Dream gone nightmare

Click to show both pictures.

T Don’t you find there is a certain resemblance between these two pictures? Which one? Can you locate the second one? Which one is legendary, which one has become a (tragic) legend?

S answer(s)

What about the differences?

S answer(s)

T What do you remember about the story of the second one?

S answer(s)

Click to show boxes and text

T Do you think the people who happened to be in the second tower felt safe before the tragedy?

S answer(s)

T Well, I visited the WTC quite a while back now, and stood on the top floor enjoying the view. I felt totally safe then. Can you imagine how I feel now when I think of this visit?

S answer(s)

Cold shivers in the back?

Click to next slide.

Slide 8  Pride scorned, pride restored

Click to picture of burning towers

T Can you describe what you see here?

S answer(s)

T I would like you to tell me in a few sentences what really happened that day.

S answer(s)

Good. Now what does the second picture symbolize?

Click for second picture and box and text

What about the meaning of the caption (still standing!)?

S answer(s)

Click for watermark-like picture of WTC project

T Why am I showing this now?

S answer(s)

will build another tower... or several

T Can you explain the meaning of the title now?

S answer(s)

Click to next slide.
While we live our quiet little life in our rather safe countries the news sometimes shakes us from our humdrum routines and pictures like this one suddenly appear on the 6 o'clock news. What feeling does a picture like this trigger in you?

S answer(s)
*Fear. Because of the sheer power of destruction that this display of force shows.*

Do you sometimes think that the peace and security you enjoy may disappear in an instant because of some madman somewhere on the other side of the globe, or maybe closer to home than you think? What do you do about it?

S answer(s)
*Well, like for the other dangers that are lurking out there, I try not to think about it, otherwise we couldn't live normally. As the proverb goes "life is not a bed of roses" so I've learned to do with it.*

T Very wise! By the way, can you explain what the title of the slide means?

S answer(s)
*Help the student(s)*

Can you imagine what I am going to show you now? What does the phrase 'playing with fire' evoke for you?

S answer(s)

T Now while most of us are leading our everyday life, some researchers and scientists are conducting dangerous experiments. Can you think of some?

S answer(s)
*How about this kind?*

Click for picture
*Scary! Isn't it? Where do you think this picture was taken? When?*

S answer(s)

T Would you say such experiments should be banned? Why/not? Are they?

S answer(s)
*In the 1950s, at the beginning of the Cold War, people in the US lived in constant fear of a nuclear attack. Do you often think that this danger is still with us or do you prefer to ignore it? Why?*
This phrase should mean something to you, it’s almost universal. What does it refer to?

A dangerous game played with a revolver and one bullet.

When is this phrase used metaphorically?

When referring to something that involves a rather high risk of accident. Correct.

Do you recognize what kind of facility we have here?

Do you feel if you lived nearby? Why?

The Three Mile Island accident was a partial core meltdown due to a loss of reactor coolant which went undetected for some time. Although radioactive gasses were released into the environment, the scientists managed to shut down the reactor just in time. It has never been used again.

No, but the first reactor is still being used and will be till 2034. What do you think of that?

Do you recognize this place? Do you know what happened there and why this plant looks so different from the one we saw before?

How do those two examples illustrate today's topic?

How do those two examples illustrate today's topic?
Slide 12  Where Russian roulette is being played (1) 3'

Click for map

T Explain what this map shows.
S answer(s)
Can you also explain the difference between east and west?
S answer(s)
The eastern part of the USA is much more populated than the west where most states are wide open and desert places with very few people living there. Also we studied a few weeks back that the west presented a major volcanic risk as well as of earthquakes. We can hardly imagine building a nuclear plant where there are such risks. Last but not least, everybody knows that nuclear reactors need to be cooled constantly so they have to be built by the sea or a river. So there are three times as many reactors in the east than in the west.

T Did you notice how many active reactors the USA have?
S answer(s)
Do you know how many there are in the UK and in your own country?
S answer(s)
T Well, the next slide will help you check your answers.

Click for next slide

Slide 13  Where Russian roulette is being played (2) 3'

Click for picture of UK and txt on map

T Describe what this map shows. Make complete sentences. How many reactors are active in the UK?
S answer(s)
Click to show picture 2 and text
How about this picture? I'm sorry, that's the only document I found and of course, it's French. But describe it in English and compare it to the one before.
S answer(s)
Description: date of operation, age, location, power in MWa, etc…
It seems France is operating more than twice as many reactors than the UK.
Yes, what do you think this is due to?
S answer(s)
Political and economic choice.
Less interference from "green" lobby, etc…

Click to next slide and title
Let's go back a few slides for a second…

Click to pic of Chernobyl plant.

Do you recognize the place?

Now this is what the area looks like 25 years after the accident.

Click for picture of nearby city of Pripyat in the Ukraine.

What can you see here?

A totally abandoned city and area due to the still lethal rate of radioactivity.

And how long do you think it will take for people to be able to live safely in this area again?

???????

Well, this graph should help you do the computing…

Click to show graph.

27 and a half years!

Excellent! 😊 Which means that by 2013 people should be able to return to live there… Would you? Why/ not? After all, the Japanese DID reconstruct Nagasaki and Hiroshima…

Click for next slide.

What does this map represent?

Can you name the countries that were more or less seriously contaminated?

Have you heard about how the French authorities dealt with the problem at the time?

As often we were told there was no danger; that the cloud had stopped at the Rhine River!

I will make no comment if you don't mind…

What are some of the most serious effects of such a disaster?

Death; cancers; malformation of babies, etc…

All right, our meeting is drawing toward its end now. Let's finish with more day-to-day dangers.

Click to next slide
Can you imagine some of the dangers we are unaware of but that are nevertheless lurking around us?

In fact I had something in mind you may not have thought of.

Click for picture of old electric car & date.

How about this?

I'm sorry, I can't see what you're ... driving at ... All I can see is an old jalopy.

Yes, but this is the ancestor of ... this:

Click to show picture of modern "green" car.

You probably see what I AM driving at now..., don't you? If not, think of the advantage(s) of such cars.

They don't pollute and they're very silent. Precisely! That's what makes them dangerous, I think..., look:

Click to show last picture.

Can you explain what I am trying to get your attention to?

So remember to be careful when you wear those things in the street, and don't listen to your music too loudly. It's bad for your ears anyway.

Have a nice week, See you soon.