Ready-Ed Publications

PHOTOCOPY MASTERS

World Events

Challenging research activities with a focus on current global events and significant events in history.

Contents

VIRUS ALERT!

You probably already know that a single virus created on one computer has the potential to bring down the most secure computer systems around the world! But how can this happen? And why does this happen? Who makes the virus in the first place and why?

What is a biological virus?

A biological virus is a microscopic organism that attaches itself to a living thing and reproduces to create more viruses. It does this by attaching itself to the living cells of both plants and animals and mixing with their DNA. This process tricks the cells into creating more viruses.

Viruses are known as *parasites* and the organism that virus attaches itself to is known as a *host*. Viruses are extremely small but they can turn into very deadly diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and the Ebola virus. Other less harmful human viruses include influenza, hepatitis, measles and chicken pox. It is difficult to classify viruses as living or non-living as they are unable to reproduce on their own, yet through a host (human being) they can reproduce and take over cells. Some viruses can even exist in the human body without causing any trouble.

What is a computer virus?

A computer virus is a destructive computer program that works in exactly the same way as a plant or animal virus. It is transmitted over the Internet either through e-mails or websites and attaches itself to files in your computer. It may reproduce these files and damage your computer in the process. Like real viruses, not all of them are harmful but there are some very destructive viruses that have been responsible for huge problems with major computer systems around the world.

Where do computer viruses come from?

Sadly, a virus is intentionally written to cause trouble with your computer system. There are no reasons for it other than the fact that the person who created the virus enjoys looking at all the damage they have caused. It is a form of vandalism.

The use of computer viruses can be traced back to the early days of the Internet in 1983. It was known for many years before that programs could "self-replicate", but the term virus was first used in 1983 when a man named Fred Cohen wrote about the similarities between computer "self-copying programs" and viruses that infect animals and plants.

The first computer virus to cause damage of any kind was written in 1986 and was known as the Brain virus. It is believed that the virus was written so as to leave the company's details on a computer for relatively harmless reasons - to track where the company's software was going. The program soon spread, however it didn't cause any damage to computers, it just showed everyone that it was possible to create a virus that could infect other computers.

Other viruses soon followed. The Internet Worm was written in 1988 by a university student to demonstrate how a virus could travel to millions of computers via the Internet. It was designed to leave no trace or damage but just to show that it was able to replicate. Unfortunately, the program DID cause problems, bringing over 6000 American computer systems crashing down, resulting in at least $10 million dollars worth of damage.

Other Viruses of Note

Melissa Virus (1999) - This virus was sent via a Word document attached to an email. When it was opened, it sent a copy of itself to the first 50 people in the computer owner's address book. It crashed many e-mail servers around the world, hitting 100,000 computers in one weekend! The creator of the virus, David L. Smith, was eventually caught and pleaded guilty, receiving a hefty fine and two year gaol sentence.

The Love Bug Virus (2000) - So far this virus has been the most damaging around the world. Created in the Philippines by a computer science student, the virus spread rapidly, causing approximately $15 billion dollars in lost working time. It basically sent an email to everyone in the computer's address book. People who received the email were tricked into thinking it was a real email as it said it came from someone they knew with a title like "I love you". It was more harmful than the Melissa virus as it also destroyed files on an infected computer's hard drive.

It was late 2006 when computer security experts first identified the worm which became known as the Storm Worm. Several news agencies and blogs named the Storm Worm one of the worst virus attacks in years.

Check Out:

www.cknow.com/vtutor/ *and* **www.vmyths.com/**

http://www.livinginternet.com/i/is_vir_first.htm

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT VIRUSES AND VIRUS HOAXES.

INTERNET WORMS

Computer Viruses

VIRUS REPORT

Your Identity: *Geega Byte*
Reporter for the IT section of The Cyber Times

Your Mission: Research a computer virus using the WWW. It may be an older virus or a current virus threatening the world. Make your report as accurate as possible.
Complete the brief below.

WORLD EVENTS

Virus Details

Date: _____

Virus name/s: _____

Specific details about how the virus is spread: _____

_____

_____

Where (which countries) did this virus originate? _____

_____

_____

What damage is this virus capable of? *(Provide specific details.)*: _____

_____

_____

What remedies are available? _____

_____

Estimated extent of damage so far? _____

_____

MISSION
☐ *Yes*
☐ *No*
ACCOMPLISHED?

World Epidemics

GLOBAL DISEASE CONTROL

Your Identity: *Carter Grafa*
Mapping Officer at Centre for Global Disease Control.

Your Mission: To prepare information for the WWW about the locations and incidences of a current contagious disease or virus. Choose a virus that is threatening areas around the world. Use websites to gather the latest information and an atlas to help you locate the regions affected. *Complete the map below.*

WORLD EVENTS

Global Locations of _____
(write name of virus)

List all the countries with recorded cases. Highlight the affected countries on the map by colouring the corresponding square in the Key (you may need to add more boxes). Record the current number of deaths for each country.

Key	
Country	# Deaths
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____
☐ _____	_____

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?
☐ *Yes*
☐ *No*

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

What is Terrorism?

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001 the subject of terrorism has exploded onto the world stage.

Terrorism, however, is not a new thing. Acts of terror have been occurring for hundreds of years. Terrorism basically means the use or threat of violence and crime to create widespread fear and grief in an attempt to greatly affect a society or government. Acts of terrorism include bombings, arson, plane hijackings, kidnappings, murder and other serious crimes.

How are terrorists different to other criminals?

Most serious criminals commit crimes for money or revenge where as the goal of terrorists is usually political. Conducting acts of terror is a way that terrorists think will bring publicity to their cause, which will then result in some sort of political change. Terrorists may be fighting for freedom for a particular race or cultural group or for a government to change its policies or political behaviour.

People throughout the world know that acts of terror result in the killing and wounding of innocent victims. Governments around the world, such as in the United States and United Kingdom, have declared a "War on Terror", however, it is difficult to fight terror as no countries wish to be seen as harbouring terrorists. Many terrorists refer to themselves as "freedom fighters".

Terrorists carefully plan their attacks to get as much media coverage as possible. They are likely to target world landmarks and tourist centres as this will spread news of the event to worldwide audiences. They believe that the more attention they receive, the more they will gather support for their cause.

Topics for Research:

Significant Groups in History

You may want to research the activities and causes of the following groups that are believed to have carried out terrorist attacks in the past.

- Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden
- Irish Republican Army (IRA)
- Palestinian Liberation Front
- Aum Shinrikyo (Japanese Cult)
- Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

Major Terrorist Attacks

- 1983-4 - Bombing attacks in Harrods, London and Brighton, England.
- 1988 - Tokyo subway gas attack, Japan.
- 1993 - Bombing attack on the World Trade Center, USA.
- 1995 - Oklahoma City Bombing, USA.
- 2001 - September 11 attacks in New York and Washington, USA.
- 2002 - Bali Bombings, Indonesia.
- 2003 - Bombings in Casablanca, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.
- 2004 - Madrid, Spain. Train explosions kill 191 and injure 1800.
- 2004 - Beslan, Russia. Islamists take over 1000 hostages in a school.

Check Out:

www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorist_incidents	TERRORISM INCIDENTS AROUND THE WORLD
www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/terrorism/	LOOKING FOR ANSWERS
http://www.afp.gov.au/policing/fighting-terrorism.aspx	FIGHTING TERRORISM IN AUSTRALIA
www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bioterror/	BIOLOGICAL WARFARE
www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/robots/	BOMB SQUAD

Terrorism around the World

LIVE AT THE SCENE

Your Identity: *Mike Rafone*
News Reporter for Eye-Witness News.

Your Mission: You have just arrived at the scene of a terrorist bomb attack. Report straight back to the studio on the events that are unfolding.
Complete the brief below.

WORLD EVENTS

News File

Date: _____ Location: _____ Time: _____

Nature of attack:_____

_____

_____

Number of victims and injured: _____

Damage to buildings and roads: _____

_____

_____

What is happening right at the moment? _____

_____

_____

_____

Possible reason/s for attack: _____

_____

_____

_____

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?
☐ *Yes*
☐ *No*