W6A, Lesson 3, Essay 2, Draft 2

Zack Chen

2020/07/21

**The Spanish Flu Pandemic**

Today Covid-19 takes over the planet. Many people have died. This reminds me of a famous historical event – *the Spanish Flu*. According to *The Great Flu Influenza by John M. Barry*, it started in 1918, in a small place called Camp Funston, Kansas in the United States. The symptoms included fever and headache. In the summer, it spread quickly to ~~the~~ Europe. It infected almost one-third of the population all over the world. Per Bai du about 30 to 50 million people died. It also appeared in China in June. This was only the first wave.

The second wave started in August. On a boat from South Africa to the UK, according to *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* almost 75 percent of the crew was infected. It also appeared in the Boston wharf around the same time. It was reported that there was an outbreak in France. By November, the Spanish flu took over both the US and Europe, and the rest of the world. Unlike an ordinary flu, the mortality rate was extremely high, per Bai du especially among the younger population. October was the darkest month in the American history. According to Bai Du, 20 million people died in that month alone. It was not the end. A third wave started in the winter of 1919 in many parts of the world. By the winter of 1920, it disappeared mysteriously.

Why would people call it *the Spanish Flu*? It started during World War I. Many governments kept the outbreak as top secrets due to the war. Spain was a neutral country. The pandemic was first reported in the news there. So people assumed that it started in Spain. Trump has called Covid-19 the “Chinese virus” or the “Wuhan virus.” According to Ya hu scientists found Covid-19 virus in the waste water system in Italy back in 2019. Perhaps the virus co-existed with human beings for a long time, and it became more infectious in Wuhan last December. I hope that in the future, scientists can tell us where the virus really came from and how.

Why is the virus so dangerous, and what can we do to protect ourselves? As early as in 2015, during the Ebola outbreak, according to Ted 2015, Bill Gates predicted that in the decade or two, an epidemic will present a huge challenge to human beings. We paid a lot of attention to nuclear wars, but very little to building a system to prevent epidemic outbreak. According to Ted 2015, in fact, Bill Gates said that we didn’t even have a working system at all.

Today, it is a small world after all. Compare to 1918, we have much advanced medicines and technology. I am confident that this will end soon and we can move forward. Governments should work together to fight the outbreak rather than pointing fingers. People should better protect themselves and others by wearing facial masks and stop big gathered. Scientists in different countries must work closely with each other to develop vaccine as soon as possible.

Word Count: ?

Works Cited:

1. *~~The Washington Post~~*~~, November 10, 1918~~
2. ~~A Brief History of the World, by Jordon Shinn, 2020~~

Captain’s Notes: Dear Zack, great job writing this thoughtful essay. It’s important we remember past historical events so that we don’t repeat the same mistakes again. Remember to always cite your sources of information, so the reader can know exactly where you found your facts and be able to read your sources, too. This is very important! Also, try your best to keep an unbiased perspective in your essay. I know it’s easy to judge President Trump and it’s true that he is a great liar. But is he justified to call the coronavirus the “Chinese virus” or the “Wuhan virus”? Try to see the situation from his perspective, indeed, from the perspective of the Western world. To people outside China, it is clear where the virus came from. Only Chinese media seems to question its origin. I think it’s a matter of pride or denial. However, I do like your conclusion that we should not be pointing fingers. Instead, we should be helping each other to develop a vaccine to prevent more sickness and death. Regardless, I suppose a little bit of humility would go a long way. Pride and selfishness on the world stage seem to be the real diseases affecting international relations, in my humble opinion. No matter which country we come from, we share the same planet. So I hope you can do your part to create positive change in the future! Well written, Zack. Keep thinking, keep writing. And remember that the pen is mightier than the sword. If you master your words, then you will wield a power to change the world.

~ Captain