

## **Hurricane Katrina kills hundreds**

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**31 August, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Hurricane Katrina kills hundreds**

**BNE:** The huge and powerful Hurricane Katrina blasted into the southern Gulf Coast states of the USA with its full and mighty force on Monday. The lethal storm may have left hundreds dead and has caused catastrophic damage. Large areas of New Orleans are under water. Thousands of homes are without electricity and safe drinking water. President George W. Bush has declared a state of emergency. He has promised financial aid to help victims and to get the whole region back on its feet.

The economic cost of the hurricane could be the highest in US history. The human cost is also continuing to rise. Many predict the death toll will be higher than the 256 killed by Hurricane Camille in 1969. Rescue services are experiencing difficulties as they try to save lives. They have to negotiate live power cables, toppled trees and dangerous debris. Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco told a news conference: "The devastation is greater than our worst fears. It's totally overwhelming."

## WARM-UPS

**1. HURRICANE:** You have just experienced a very powerful hurricane. Talk to the other people in your class who also experienced the hurricane. What did you do the day before? What were your thoughts and feelings as the hurricane hit? Did the hurricane do any damage? What are you going to do from now?

**2. MOTHER NATURE:** In pairs / groups, talk about the power of nature. Have you experienced any of the following? What would you do in each of these situations?

- Hurricanes / Typhoons
- Earthquakes
- Volcanoes
- Flooding and landslides
- Droughts
- Avalanches
- Millions (plagues) of locusts
- Other

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Hurricanes / storms / New Orleans / no electricity / no drinking water / financial aid / states of emergency / death tolls / rescue services / toppled trees / worst fears*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. EMERGENCY:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "emergency". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. HURRICANE TASKS:** In pairs / groups, discuss the different tasks and duties the following people have when a deadly hurricane hits. What extra things do you think these people could do?

- a. The country's leader
- b. The city mayor
- c. The head of the national weather forecast center
- d. Neighbors
- e. Police officers
- f. Fire fighters
- g. Coastguards
- h. TV news reporters

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think governments do enough to help disaster victims. Students B think governments need to do more to help disaster victims. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. Hurricane Katrina slammed into the US Gulf Coast states.               | T / F |
| b. The deadly storm caused widespread damage.                             | T / F |
| c. Power and water supplies were not affected.                            | T / F |
| d. President Bush has promised to provide compensation.                   | T / F |
| e. The storm may be the costliest in US history.                          | T / F |
| f. Katrina may be the deadliest storm to hit the US in over four decades. | T / F |
| g. Live power cables are helping efforts to reach survivors.              | T / F |
| h. Louisiana's Governor said the storm wasn't as bad as she had feared.   | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| a. huge         | deadly      |
| b. blasted      | get around  |
| c. lethal       | area        |
| d. aid          | increase    |
| e. region       | financial   |
| f. economic     | enormous    |
| g. rise         | problems    |
| h. difficulties | slammed     |
| i. negotiate    | destruction |
| j. devastation  | support     |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Hurricane Katrina blasted   | is also continuing to rise    |
| b. The lethal storm may have   | back on its feet              |
| c. catastrophic                | trees                         |
| d. George W. Bush has declared | into the southern Gulf Coast  |
| e. get the whole region        | toll                          |
| f. The human cost              | than our worst fears          |
| g. death                       | left hundreds dead            |
| h. Rescue services             | a state of emergency          |
| i. toppled                     | are experiencing difficulties |
| j. The devastation is greater  | damage                        |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**WHICH WORD?** Strike through the incorrect word in the *italicized* pairs.

### **Hurricane Katrina kills hundreds**

**BNE:** The *huge / high* and powerful Hurricane Katrina blasted into the southern Gulf Coast states of the USA with its full and mighty *farce / force* on Monday. The *lethal / lethargic* storm may have left hundreds dead and has caused catastrophic damage. Large areas of New Orleans are under water. Thousands of homes are without electricity and safe drinking water. President George W. Bush has *declined / declared a state / city* of emergency. He has promised financial aid to help victims and to get the whole region back on its *feet / hands*.

The economic *cost / cast* of the hurricane could be the highest in US history. The *human / person* cost is also continuing to rise. Many predict the death *toll / tale* will be higher than the 256 killed by Hurricane Camille in 1969. Rescue services are experiencing difficulties as they try to save lives. They have to negotiate *live / dead* power cables, toppled trees and dangerous *debris / debts*. Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco told a news conference: "The devastation is greater than our worst tears / fears. It's totally overwhelming."

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'gulf'** and **'coast'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. WHICH WORD?** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the relationships between the correct and incorrect words. Were the words new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "HURRICANE" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about hurricanes and natural disasters.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- blasted
- force
- catastrophic
- water
- state
- feet
- history
- death toll
- difficulties
- negotiate
- debris
- fears

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What were your first thoughts about this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What adjective would you use to describe this article?
- d. What do you know about hurricanes?
- e. What's the difference between a hurricane, typhoon and cyclone?
- f. Do you think global warming has changed the power and pattern of hurricanes, typhoons etc?
- g. What's the best thing to do when a hurricane is coming?
- h. What are the strongest winds you have ever felt?
- i. Do you think a huge hurricane is the scariest natural phenomenon?
- j. Have you ever experienced a natural disaster?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What would you do if a giant hurricane was on its way here?
- d. Why do you think people choose to live in hurricane areas?
- e. Do you live in a part of the world affected by natural disasters?
- f. What would you do if your house was blown down in a hurricane?
- g. Would/Do you pray to God to protect you during a natural disaster?
- h. If you evacuated your home, would you worry about looters?
- i. Is your community the type that would help each other in a natural disaster?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## **SPEAKING**

### **HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS:**

In pairs / groups, create a disaster plan. Agree on what to do in the event of a huge (the most powerful ever) hurricane approaching your village / town / city.

	MOST IMPORTANT THING	SECOND MOST IMPORTANT THING	THIRD MOST IMPORTANT THING
One week before			
Two days before			
The day before			
The day of the hurricane			
During the hurricane			
The day after the hurricane			

After you have finished, change partners and tell each other about your ideas. Give each other advice on how to make your plans / ideas better.

Return to your original partner and use the advice you got to make your plans better.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Hurricane Katrina kills hundreds**

**BNE:** The huge and powerful Hurricane Katrina \_\_\_\_\_ into the southern Gulf Coast states of the USA with its full and \_\_\_\_\_ force on Monday. The lethal storm may have left hundreds dead and has caused catastrophic \_\_\_\_\_. Large areas of New Orleans are under water. Thousands of homes are without electricity and \_\_\_\_\_ drinking water. President George W. Bush has \_\_\_\_\_ a state of emergency. He has promised financial aid to help victims and to get the whole \_\_\_\_\_ back on its feet.

The \_\_\_\_\_ cost of the hurricane could be the highest in US history. The \_\_\_\_\_ cost is also continuing to rise. Many predict the death \_\_\_\_\_ will be higher than the 256 killed by Hurricane Camille in 1969. \_\_\_\_\_ services are experiencing difficulties as they try to save lives. They have to \_\_\_\_\_ live power cables, toppled trees and dangerous \_\_\_\_\_. Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco told a news conference: "The devastation is \_\_\_\_\_ than our worst fears. It's totally overwhelming."

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Hurricane Katrina. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. STORMS:** Create a fact sheet about storms and the differences between hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones. Show and explain your fact sheets to your classmates in your next lesson.

**4. DIARY / JOURNAL ENTRY:** Imagine you experienced a giant hurricane. Write a diary / journal entry explaining your 5-hour experience as the eye of the storm passed over your house. Read what you wrote to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| a. huge         | enormous    |
| b. blasted      | slammed     |
| c. lethal       | deadly      |
| d. aid          | support     |
| e. region       | area        |
| f. economic     | financial   |
| g. rise         | increase    |
| h. difficulties | problems    |
| i. negotiate    | get around  |
| j. devastation  | destruction |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Hurricane Katrina blasted   | into the southern Gulf Coast  |
| b. The lethal storm may have   | left hundreds dead            |
| c. catastrophic                | damage                        |
| d. George W. Bush has declared | a state of emergency          |
| e. get the whole region        | back on its feet              |
| f. The human cost              | is also continuing to rise    |
| g. death                       | toll                          |
| h. Rescue services             | are experiencing difficulties |
| i. toppled                     | trees                         |
| j. The devastation is greater  | than our worst fears          |

### WHICH WORD?

#### Hurricane Katrina kills hundreds

**BNE:** The *huge* / ~~high~~ and powerful Hurricane Katrina blasted into the southern Gulf Coast states of the USA with its full and mighty ~~farce~~ / *force* on Monday. The *lethal* / ~~lethargic~~ storm may have left hundreds dead and has caused catastrophic damage. Large areas of New Orleans are under water. Thousands of homes are without electricity and safe drinking water. President George W. Bush has ~~declined~~ / *declared* a *state* / ~~city~~ of emergency. He has promised financial aid to help victims and to get the whole region back on its *feet* / ~~hands~~.

The economic *cost* / ~~cast~~ of the hurricane could be the highest in US history. The *human* / ~~person~~-cost is also continuing to rise. Many predict the death *toll* / ~~tale~~ will be higher than the 256 killed by Hurricane Camille in 1969. Rescue services are experiencing difficulties as they try to save lives. They have to negotiate *live* / ~~dead~~ power cables, toppled trees and dangerous *debris* / ~~debts~~. Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco told a news conference: "The devastation is greater than our worst ~~tears~~ / *fears*. It's totally overwhelming."