

## Hurricane Irma slams into Caribbean

9th September, 2017



A record-breaking hurricane is causing death and destruction as it passes through the Caribbean and heads towards the U.S. state of Florida. On Thursday, Hurricane Irma caused major devastation across the Caribbean islands

of Barbuda, St. Martin, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands. The Prime Minister of Barbuda, Gaston Browne, said about 95 per cent of the buildings on the island had suffered some damage. He said: "It's absolute devastation. The island is literally under water....Barbuda is barely habitable." A government official for St Martin said: "There is massive destruction. We'll concentrate our first efforts so that in the next hours, people can get access to food and drinking water."

Hurricane Irma is a category 5 storm – the strongest on the 1-5 scale of hurricanes. It is the second strongest hurricane ever to be recorded and the strongest ever recorded east of the Caribbean Sea. Irma has kept a wind speed close to 300kph for more than 24 hours. This is the longest period ever recorded. Meteorologists said Hurricane Irma was over 1,200km wide. It is likely to become a Category 4 hurricane when it makes landfall in Florida on Saturday morning. Florida officials have already ordered a mandatory evacuation of Florida Keys - the southern part of the state of Florida. Residents there are bracing themselves for winds of up to 300kph and massive and damaging storm surges.

Sources: [wired.com](http://wired.com) / [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)

## Writing

A hurricane is the scariest of all natural disasters. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

record-breaking / hurricane / state / devastation / islands / damage / under water / storm / east / wind speed / meteorologists / landfall / evacuation / storm surges

## True / False

- The opening sentence says Hurricane Irma was record breaking. T / F
- Irma damaged about 95% of buildings on the island of Barbuda. T / F
- Barbuda's Prime Minister said the island was pretty much under water. T / F
- A St Martin official said the priority was to get the Internet working. T / F
- The article said Irma is the second-strongest hurricane ever recorded. T / F
- Hurricane Irma's strongest wind speeds have been 250kph. T / F
- Hurricane Irma is about 1,200km in diameter. T / F
- Residents in southern Florida have been told to stay at home. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <b>causing</b>        | a. destruction         |
| 2. <b>heads</b>          | b. spectrum            |
| 3. <b>devastation</b>    | c. focus               |
| 4. <b>absolute</b>       | d. weather forecasters |
| 5. <b>concentrate</b>    | e. leading to          |
| 6. <b>scale</b>          | f. compulsory          |
| 7. <b>recorded</b>       | g. total               |
| 8. <b>meteorologists</b> | h. moves               |
| 9. <b>mandatory</b>      | i. enormous            |
| 10. <b>massive</b>       | j. registered          |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of hurricanes?
- How can people prepare for a hurricane?
- What do you think it's like to experience a massive hurricane?
- How can people recover from the devastation of a hurricane?
- Would you evacuate if you knew a hurricane was coming?
- Should there be a world hurricane recovery fund?
- What are the differences between hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones?
- How do hurricanes form?

# Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

1. A record-breaking hurricane is
  2. Hurricane Irma caused major
  3. 95% of the buildings on the island had
  4. A government
  5. people can get access
  6. It is the second strongest hurricane
  7. a wind speed close
  8. It is likely to become a
  9. officials have already ordered a mandatory
  10. massive and damaging
- a. suffered some damage
  - b. to food and drinking water
  - c. evacuation of Florida Keys
  - d. to 300kph
  - e. devastation
  - f. Category 4 hurricane
  - g. causing death and destruction
  - h. storm surges
  - i. official
  - j. ever to be recorded

## Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about the Caribbean?
- c) Why don't governments prepare better for hurricanes?
- d) What would 300kph winds do to a town?
- e) What do meteorologists do every day?
- f) What part does global warming playing play with hurricanes?
- g) What happens during a storm surge?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a meteorologist?

## Spelling

1. causing death and otdsricutne
2. caused major nsoaveitdat
3. The island is yalrlliet under water
4. Barbuda is barely hiaebbta
5. We'll erctenotcna our first efforts
6. get asscce to food
7. a ecoyatrg 5 storm
8. stotoreeisgolm said Hurricane Irma was...
9. when it makes ldaafnll in Florida
10. a mandatory taeuovniac of Florida Keys
11. Residents there are iargnbc themselves
12. damaging storm uesrgs

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. a	4. g	5. c
6. b	7. j	8. d	9. f	10. i

## Role Play

### Role A – Mobile Phone

You think your mobile phone is the most important thing to save in a hurricane. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): your wallet, food or jewellery.

### Role B – Wallet

You think your wallet is the most important thing to save in a hurricane. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): your mobile phone, food or jewellery.

### Role C – Food

You think food is the most important thing to save in a hurricane. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): your wallet, your mobile phone or jewellery.

### Role D – Jewellery

You think jewellery is the most important thing to save in a hurricane. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): your wallet, food or your mobile phone.

## Speaking – Possessions

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things to rescue in a hurricane at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- jewellery
- teddy bear
- food
- wallet
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- mobile phone
- photographs
- clothes

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.