

Name: _____

Reading Strategy Boxes

Fiction or Nonfiction? How do you know?	Prediction 1.	Questions 1. 2.
Author's Purpose P I E	Visualize	Connect 1. 2.



A Natural Disaster: Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina was one of the worst storms ever to strike the United States. Like all hurricanes, it was a huge, swirling storm. It formed over warm seawater. On August 25, 2005, the storm brushed the tip of Florida. It didn't cause too much damage. But then the storm spun across the Gulf of Mexico. It grew stronger. It gathered speed and moisture. Then, it made landfall near the Louisiana-Mississippi border on August 29.

Before any hurricane reaches shore, a storm surge hits the coast. These high waves cause flooding. The day before the storm struck, weather forecasters said that it was headed for New Orleans. This city is in Louisiana. It lies below sea level! Concrete walls called levees are built around it. They are meant to hold back storm surges. As the storm bore down on them, people were told to leave the city. But many old and poor people had no way to leave.

Hurricane Katrina's high winds and giant waves wiped out parts of three states. The states were Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. In Biloxi and Gulfport, Mississippi, the storm surge was twenty-nine feet high. That's as tall as a four-story building! Much of both of these cities vanished. The rest of the buildings were ruined.

New Orleans had the worst loss of life. Four of its levees broke. This let water flood 80 percent of the city. In some places, the water was twenty-feet deep. It covered the roofs of one-story homes. And it was dirty water. It had sewage, gas, dead animals, mud, and debris in it.



For a week after the storm, the news showed images of dead bodies floating in the streets. Hundreds of people were stuck on roofs. Hundreds more were stranded on highway overpasses. They had no food, water, or toilets. All of these people had to be rescued by helicopters or boats. More than 20,000 people were inside a sports stadium. They quickly ran out of food and water.

No one in the city had drinking water or electric power. The situation was bad in hospitals and nursing homes, too. To keep seriously ill people alive, nurses worked **ventilators** by hand. They had to do this twenty-four hours a day. Otherwise the patients could not breathe.

Rescue teams worked day and night. It took a week to get everyone out of the city. They went to shelters in other states. A month passed before everyone had a roof over his or her head. About half a million people left the city. Many chose not to return.

Hurricane Katrina killed more than 1,700 people. It left hundreds of thousands homeless. It took billions of dollars and many years to restore the area. This storm made the U.S. government see the need to improve emergency plans before the next huge hurricane.



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Directions: Darken the best answer choice.

1. Hurricane Katrina did *not* cause major damage in the state of
 - Ⓐ Mississippi.
 - Ⓑ Florida.
 - Ⓒ Alabama.
 - Ⓓ Louisiana.

2. Ventilators are devices that
 - Ⓐ direct emergency personnel to an injured person's location.
 - Ⓑ stop fires from spreading.
 - Ⓒ prevent heart attacks.
 - Ⓓ help people to inhale and exhale.

3. Which event occurred third?
 - Ⓐ Hurricane Katrina spun across the Atlantic Ocean.
 - Ⓑ Hurricane Katrina's storm surge struck shore.
 - Ⓒ Hurricane Katrina spun across the Gulf of Mexico.
 - Ⓓ Levees broke and flooded New Orleans.

4. Why did so many people have to be rescued by helicopter?
 - Ⓐ Only helicopters could withstand the storm surge.
 - Ⓑ No other rescue vehicles were available.
 - Ⓒ People had gone to the highest places to keep from drowning.
 - Ⓓ Police and city rescue workers were on strike.

5. What is unusual about the city of New Orleans?
 - Ⓐ It is built below sea level.
 - Ⓑ It is often destroyed by huge hurricanes.
 - Ⓒ Frequent storms knock out its electrical power grid.
 - Ⓓ Most of the people who live there have no way to leave the city.

6. Why was it dangerous for people to be without clean water after the storm?
 - Ⓐ They might drink dirty water and die.
 - Ⓑ They could not take a shower.
 - Ⓒ They could die of starvation.
 - Ⓓ They might drown in filthy water.

