

2-C: READING SELECTION

Directions: Read “Preparing for a Hurricane” and answer the questions that follow.

Introduction

John’s family has moved into an area prone to being struck by hurricanes. He found several pamphlets in the town library about how a family should prepare for a hurricane. The following excerpts were taken from one of these pamphlets.

Preparing for a Hurricane

Hurricanes

A hurricane is a tropical storm with winds that blow at seventy-four miles per hour or higher. Hurricanes begin as tropical storms and become more powerful as they move across the ocean. *Figure 1* shows the wind speed and potential damage for the five categories of hurricanes.

Figure 1

CATEGORY	WIND SPEED	DAMAGE
1	74–95 mph	Minor
2	96–110 mph	Moderate
3	111–130 mph	Major
4	131–155 mph	Severe
5	Above 155 mph	Catastrophic

As a hurricane approaches, information about its track will be broadcast over the local radio or TV stations. Several phrases will be used to tell how close a hurricane is to an area, and it is important to know the phrases and what each means. They provide information important to making good decisions about how to deal with the coming storm. *Figure 2* lists these phrases.

Figure 2

Hurricane Watch: A hurricane is coming toward the area and might arrive within 36 hours.

Hurricane Warning: A hurricane is expected to strike the area within 24 hours. All preparations for surviving the storm should be completed as soon as this warning is heard.

Evacuation Order: This tells you to leave the area as quickly as possible. Once this order is given, it must be obeyed. It is the most important instruction given prior to the storm.

Preparing a Hurricane Disaster Plan

Each family should prepare a disaster plan they will follow if a hurricane strikes their area. Knowledge of hurricanes is not enough; it is important to develop both a hurricane disaster plan and a survival kit. Remember to prepare for the worst and that will ensure your safety regardless of the severity of the hurricane.

The first thing to do when developing a disaster plan is to decide whether or not your house can withstand a hurricane. Asking yourself several questions about your house does this. Was it built strong enough to withstand the high level of winds in a hurricane? In recent years, hurricane-building standards have been developed for local areas. They will help you determine if your house can withstand the winds from the various categories of hurricane. See if your house meets these standards before making a decision. If you live in a mobile or manufactured home, plan to go to a safer place when a hurricane threatens. These types of houses are not good places to be during a hurricane.

Is your house located on high enough ground so it will not get flooded from the rains that accompany a hurricane? If your house is prone to flooding or is in an area that has been flooded in previous hurricanes, plan to leave when the hurricane is approaching.

If you decide it will be necessary to leave your home, plan where you will go during a hurricane. Several options are available to you. These include staying with friends or relatives. You can also leave the area completely. Finally, you can decide that you will go to a public shelter in your area. Remember to ask your friends or relatives if you can stay with them if that is what you decide to do.

The next thing to do is to prepare an evacuation route. Determine several routes you can use to reach the locations you have chosen. It is very possible that one of your routes will be blocked by flooding or falling debris.

The last step is to actually drive the various routes you have identified. See if they go through areas that flood in a heavy rain. Look for heavily wooded areas where trees could block the road. Determine which route would be best to take during a hurricane.

Making a Disaster Survival Kit

The other thing that must be done is to make a survival kit. Prepare your kit as if you will remain in your house. If you leave, you will take only parts of it with you. However, if you are forced to remain in your house, you and your family will have sufficient supplies to live until the municipal services are restored.

The kit should include enough provisions to live without municipal services for at least one week following a hurricane. Use water-resistant containers to store your supplies. Remember to check the kit to ensure things are working and to see what needs to be restocked.

Figure 3 is a list of items often included in survival kits. It is only a sample listing and people should add any items they feel may be important in an emergency.

Figure 3

- ☒ water—one gallon per person daily
- ☒ medicines—prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines
- ☒ first aid kit and booklet
- ☒ food—non-perishable foods and foods family members need to live
- ☒ blankets and several changes of clothes
- ☒ flashlights—one for each family member
- ☒ portable radio
- ☒ batteries—for flashlights and radio
- ☒ water purification kit
- ☒ non-electric can opener
- ☒ toilet paper, paper towels, pre-moistened towelettes
- ☒ eating utensils
- ☒ mosquito repellent and citronella candle
- ☒ eyeglasses
- ☒ portable lantern and batteries or fuel
- ☒ games or activities for children