



Be Disaster Safe 6–8

Disaster Cycle

LESSON PLAN 2

Prepare

Young people need help understanding that they and their families can be prepared for many of the problems that come with emergency situations.

Key Terms and Concepts

consequences
disaster
emergency
prepare

Purpose

To help students understand the importance of being prepared in case of an emergency

Objectives

The students will—

- Discuss, define and assess the importance of being prepared.
- Use *What If?* to identify all the possible problems for six outcomes of a disaster.
- Work in groups to list preparations that would lessen the negative effects of a disaster.
- Write how-to books to help others prepare to endure potential disasters.
- Write news reports about an imaginary town and the effect its preparations had on the experiences of its citizens during a disaster. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Use the graphic organizer *The Effects of a Disaster* to assess the effects of a prolonged blackout for individuals, families and communities.
- Write two-page brochures about steps individuals, families and communities must take to prepare for a possible disaster.
- Share *The Effects of a Disaster* with family members and then use it to begin preparations for a family plan in the event of a disaster. (Home Connection)

Activities

“Be Prepared”

“The Night the Lights Went Out”



Visit the American Red Cross Web site
at www.redcross.org/disaster/masters



Be Disaster Safe

6-8

LESSON PLAN 2

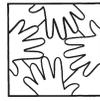
Prepare

Materials

- *What If?*, 1 copy per group of students
- Art materials for creating how-to books



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"Be Prepared"

SET UP 5 minutes CONDUCT 45 minutes

Social Studies: Community; Language Arts: Writing; Visual Arts: Illustration

1. Ask students what they believe is meant by the recommendation to "be prepared." How do they prepare for a test? How do they prepare to study? How do they prepare for a ball game? Does their preparation require "props," such as a book or a light? How many steps must be taken to prepare? Answers will vary. Everyone has different ways to prepare. For example, to read, you must have a book, a place to settle and adequate light. At night, the light has to have a working bulb and either a battery or a connection to a source of electricity.
2. Do students believe it is wise to be prepared? Why or why not? What events or potential events do they believe would run more smoothly or have a more positive outcome because they had prepared? Explain. Answers will vary. They will run the gamut from a preference for spontaneous decisions and actions to a preference for careful preparation and deliberate decision-making. Some activities that improve with preparation include taking a test, presenting a play or speech and participating in a contest.
3. Distribute *What If?* to groups of students. There are six consequences of a disaster listed. What challenges would each consequence pose for people and communities? Explain.

Answers will vary, but may include—

1. If electric lines are down, people could be deprived of light, working stoves, heating and air conditioning, radio, television, electricity-based phones or computers. Vital machinery and the devices of modern technology in hospitals and other essential institutions might not work.
2. If homes are flooded, furniture would be ruined and unusable, so there might not be anywhere to sleep or rest. The pilot lights of gas stoves and gas water heaters might be drowned, causing gas to escape into the air. Floors would be covered in mud and debris. The water supply might be contaminated.
3. If phone lines are inoperable, people would not be able to communicate with loved ones or with emergency personnel.
4. If roads are blocked or washed out, emergency personnel could not reach those who need help, nor could people reach safe places or medical institutions. Evacuations might not be possible and certainly wouldn't be easy.
5. If hospitals are inaccessible, people in the hospitals may not have essential medicines or care, and people who need medical help will not receive it.



Be Disaster Safe

6-8

LESSON PLAN 2

Prepare

6. If people must abandon their homes for a safe place, they may not have the supplies they need for basic living, such as potable water, food and blankets.

4. When they have completed the activity sheet, discuss their brainstorm. Compile their ideas for each consequence. Then, divide the students into six groups and assign one consequence to each group. Ask them to consider the problem and try to determine preparations that would lessen the negative results of their assigned consequence. Answers will vary. Their preparations must be feasible and include simple things, like storing up-to-date batteries for a flashlight and battery powered radios.



Wrap-Up

Have students take the information from their brainstorms and activity sheets and create how-to books on preparing for potential disaster for families or community centers to follow. Have students include illustrations wherever a picture would clarify directions and to make the books so simple to follow that anyone could profit from the information.



Look for books to be written clearly and illustrated to help readers make the best use of the information. They must include all the information from the brainstorms and the activity sheets, and they should reassure readers that preparations can make a positive difference in getting through a disaster.



Linking Across the Curriculum

Language Arts: Writing

Have student teams write news reports on an imaginary town hit by an imaginary disaster. Reports can be written for every bureau of the paper, from sports and features to metropolitan news and editorial columns. Students' news reports are to use information from the brainstorm and the activity sheet. Each type of news report must reflect the slant of the bureau, such as metro news or sports. The reports must show the positive results of preparing to face potential disasters ahead of time.



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Be Disaster Safe

6-8

LESSON PLAN 2

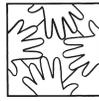
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Materials

- *The Effects of a Disaster*, 1 copy per student
- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers



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"The Night the Lights Went Out"

SET UP 5 minutes CONDUCT 45 minutes

Social Studies: Community; Language Arts: Writing; Mathematics: Problem Solving

1. Ask students to remember a time when the electricity in their home went out.
 - What caused this minor disaster?
 - Did other homes on the block or in the town experience the blackout?
 - How did it affect their activities?
 - How long did it last?
 - Did they have alternative light sources available?

Answers will vary.

2. Distribute *The Effects of a Disaster* to students. Ask students to consider the following disaster:

Due to high, straight-line winds that downed many trees in the town, the electricity for most of the residents and businesses is out. The power company is overwhelmed and advises that power will be out for days.

3. Divide the class into three teams of students. Working with their team, have students make a list of the possible effects of this disaster for an assigned group: individuals, families or the community. Have team members write their results in the circle marked EFFECTS.

For example: One effect for families in their homes would be a lack of air conditioning or heat.

4. Now, invite the student teams to describe steps each group could have taken before the disaster to prevent or lessen its negative impact. Have them write their preparations in the circle marked PREPARATIONS BEFORE THE DISASTER.



Wrap-Up

Challenge each team to work together to publish their ideas in a simple, illustrated two-page brochure for a public service project. Each team will make copies of its brochure to share with the members of the other teams.



Brochures must be clearly written so that anyone could use the information. Illustrations must be accurate and add information to the overall brochure.



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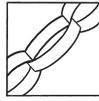
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Linking Across the Curriculum

Language Arts: Writing; Health: Emotional and Mental Health

Discuss—Why is it important to be calm when disasters happen? How can you calm yourself when disaster strikes? Describe calming scenarios or activities that will help someone avoid panic during a disaster, focusing on the important information and taking action calmly and confidently. For example, when you become aware of a disaster, stop, sit and catch your breath. Students can make a list of their ideas and publish the list in a short, illustrated brochure to share with others.



Home Connection

Have students take the set of completed brochures home to share with family members. As the families discuss the information in the brochures, they can draw up a plan to follow as individuals, as family members and as community residents in preparation for any potential disaster that might occur in their town or region.



What If?

Page 1 of 1

Name _____

Directions: What if a disaster hit your town? Consider the following possible results of disaster. What different problems do you think would be created for people by each result? List them under the specific consequence.

- Electric lines are down.
- First floors of homes are wet and covered with mud.
- Phone lines are not functioning.
- Roads are washed out or blocked by fallen trees or mudslides.
- Hospitals are inaccessible.
- People must abandon their homes for safer places.





The Effects of a Disaster

Page 1 of 1

Name _____

Directions: Use this graphic organizer to help you determine the impact of a prolonged blackout for one of three groups of people: individuals, families and the community.

