

Write one important fact from each paragraph in this space.

Science Shorts -7

Hang On -Hurricanes

A hurricane is one of the most powerful storms on earth. Hurricanes are wind storms with thunder and lightning that develop over warm ocean water. Hurricanes begin as tropical storms with wind speeds up to seventy-three mph. Once the wind speed reaches seventy-four mph, the storm is classified as a hurricane and given a name. Hurricanes are named alphabetically each year, A - W except for Q and U. Hurricane Andrew in September of 1992 was the first hurricane of the season. If a hurricane was named Earl, you would know that it was the fifth one of the season - A, B, C, D and E.

Hurricane season is from June to November with September being the most active month. Most of the storms of this type that strike the United States are found in the coastal areas of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina are the states most often hit. Hurricanes occur in other parts of the world also, but are known by other names. Hurricanes in the western Pacific Ocean are known as typhoons and ones in the Indian Ocean and near Australia are called cyclones.

A person standing on the beach watching a hurricane approach would first see the sky get darker and feel the wind begin to gust. Waves begin to crash on the shoreline and heavy thunderstorms move through the area one after another. Torrential rains and horrendous winds strike the area until, suddenly, all action stops as the eye passes over. The eye of the hurricane is calm and quiet. People directly beneath the eye can often see the stars in the sky. However, the back half of the storm soon follows and the wind and rain begin again.

Trailer parks seem to be the most unsafe places to ride out a hurricane because the homes are not sturdy enough to withstand the wind. No building is totally safe, however. Hurricanes have collapsed large hotels and high-rise apartment buildings. They have downed power lines and uprooted trees. These storms are rated as to how severe they are. A Category One hurricane has wind speeds of seventy-four to ninety five mph and cause very little damage. A Category Five storm has wind speeds over one hundred fifty mph and is catastrophic.

The winds are not the most dangerous part of the hurricane. The storm surge - water pushed by the winds does the most damage and kills the most people. The Galveston Hurricane of 1900 (A Category 4 hurricane estimated to have winds of 135 mph.) caused a storm surge of over 15 feet, which washed over the entire island. Over 8,000 people were killed.

A catastrophe is an event that causes great damage or destruction. Use the clues to complete the sentences using the words listed in the word bank. Then, keeping the boxed letters in the order they appear, place them in the Secret Word Box. The answer will be another name for a catastrophe.

1. A building must be to last through a storm.
 _ _ _ _ _

2. Homes in parks are not sturdy.
 _ _ _ _ _ _

3. Hurricanes start with darkness and a of wind.
 _ _ _ _

4. near the ocean _ _ _ _

5. unusually heavy _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

6. warm and wet _ _ _ _ _

Secret Word Box

_ _ _ _ _
 (another word for catastrophe)

Word Bank

sturdy
 tropical
 trailer
 gust
 coastal
 torrential

Find the answers to these questions in the reading.

7. Hurricanes in the western Pacific are called _____.
8. Hurricanes in the Indian Ocean and Australia are called _____.
9. List the states that most often hit by hurricanes.

1.	5.
2.	6.
3.	7.
4.	8.
10. Put the following events in order from 1-5.
 - _____ Back half of the storm arrives.
 - _____ Sky gets darker and the wind begins to gust.
 - _____ The eye passes over.
 - _____ Waves begin to crash on the shoreline
 - _____ Heavy thunderstorms move through the area.