

14 I can describe natural disasters

A Types of disaster



Hurricane¹: this word is used especially of storms in the western Atlantic. It is a **violent** storm with very strong winds. In other parts of the world, especially Asia, it is called a **typhoon**.

Earthquake²: a **sudden** violent movement of the **ground** causing **damage**.

Tidal wave³: a very large ocean wave that is caused by a storm or

earthquake, and which **destroys** things when it reaches land.

Volcanic eruption⁴: a **volcano** is a mountain with a hole in the top, and when it **erupts**, hot gases and **lava** are forced out into the air and onto the **surrounding** land.

Drought⁵: a long period with no rain. **Crops** die, and people may **starve to death**.

Glossary

- disaster** a very bad event, causing harm or death.
- violent** very strong and usually causing damage. **violence** N.
- sudden** happening very quickly. **suddenly** ADV.
- ground** the top part of the earth's surface that people walk on.
- damage** harm or injury caused when sth is broken. **damage** v.
- destroy sth** break sth completely so it can't be used again. **destruction** N.
- erupt** explode and throw out fire, burning rocks, etc.
- lava** hot liquid rock (see picture).
- surrounding** that is near or around sth. **surroundings** N.
- crops** plants that are grown for food, e.g. rice and potatoes.
- starve (to death)** suffer (or die) because you don't have enough food.

1 Combine five more pairs of words from the box to form compound words or phrases.

earth ✓ volcanic tidal surrounding starve land
eruption violent wave quake ✓ to death storm

▶ earthquake _____

2 What nouns are formed from these adjectives and verbs?

▶ volcanic volcano 2 violent _____ 4 surrounding _____
1 destroy _____ 3 erupt _____ 5 damage _____

3 Complete the words in the sentences.

- ▶ When the tidal wave reached land, it was over ten metres high.
- 1 During the h_____, winds reached over 150 kph, and many homes were either completely d_____ or badly d_____. It was a terrible d_____ for the island.
- 2 They expect a period of d_____ : the c_____ will die and people could s_____.
- 3 The volcano e_____ without warning and the g_____ was covered in red, hot l_____.
- 4 There was a s_____ and v_____ storm. It was the beginning of the t_____.

4 Test yourself. Cover the texts and look at the pictures. Can you name each disaster and what happens?

B Effects

EARTHQUAKE HITS KASHMIR

Late last night a sudden earthquake struck the region of Kashmir on the borders of India and Pakistan, and hundreds of people are thought to have lost their lives as buildings collapsed while they slept.

Thousands have now been **evacuated**, but there are **fears** that many are still **trapped** inside their homes, so the **death toll** could rise. The damage has already been

considerable and the next 48 hours will be **crucial**, not only to **rescue** more people but also to try to **maintain supplies** of water and electricity.

Glossary

- hit sth/sb** • make sudden violent contact with sth/sb. SYN **strike sth/sb**.
- collapse** • If a building **collapses**, it falls to the ground. **collapse** N.
- evacuate sb** • move sb away from a dangerous place. **evacuation** N.
- fear** • a feeling that sth bad might happen. **fear** v.
- trap sb** • If sb is **trapped**, they are inside sth and cannot get out.
- death toll** • the number of people killed in a disaster, accident, etc.
- considerable** • very large in size or amount.
- crucial** • very important.
- rescue sb** • take sb from a dangerous place to safety. SYN **save sb**.
- maintain sth** • make sth continue at a certain level.
- supply (PL supplies)** • an amount of sth that you need.

5 Complete the text with words from the box in the correct form.

supply trap earthquake ✓ maintain strike/hit fear collapse evacuate rescue

When an earthquake (1) _____ a city, there is always a danger that buildings will (2) _____ and people will be (3) _____ inside. As soon as the immediate danger has passed, the first job is to (4) _____ people from the area, and (5) _____ those in danger. At the same time, the government will send in (6) _____ of food, water, and blankets to the disaster area. One of the hardest things of all is to (7) _____ a supply of clean drinking water, and there is always the (8) _____ that more people could die.

6 Replace the underlined words with a different word that has the same meaning.

- ▶ Many people are afraid that there will be more earthquakes. fear
- 1 Many buildings fell to the ground. _____
- 2 It could be a very important decision. _____
- 3 The villagers have all been moved from the village. _____
- 4 There are people who are inside their homes and cannot get out. _____
- 5 Scientists believe the hurricane will reach and attack Florida within 24 hours. _____
- 6 The number of people killed could be as high as 2,000. _____
- 7 The storm has done a great deal of damage. _____
- 8 He was injured while trying to take his son to safety from the fire. _____

7 Test yourself. Look at the glossary words and cover the meanings. Can you remember the meanings?