

Hurricane Dennis menaces U.S. coast

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Today's contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
After Reading	6
Discussion	7
Speaking	8
Listening Gap Fill	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

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THE ARTICLE

Hurricane Dennis menaces U.S. coast

BNE: An ever-strengthening Hurricane Dennis has been upgraded to a category 4 hurricane with catastrophic winds nearing 250 kph. It is moving ominously close to America's southern coastline and is expected to make landfall Sunday evening, local time. Fears are that Dennis will batter the same areas still trying to recover from the lethal Hurricane Ivan, which caused widespread devastation in last year's hurricane season. Dennis is following a very similar path to its vicious predecessor. Ivan pummeled into coastal communities last year, killing at least 90 people and causing \$7 billion of damage.

Dennis is the earliest category 4 hurricane to develop in the Caribbean. It has already cost 20 lives as it traversed Haiti and Cuba, leaving wide scale destruction in its trail. Forecasters said Dennis is the most ferocious storm to hit the region in over 150 years. Florida Governor Jeb Bush said: "It is a storm that is huge.... the devastation that could take place is something we have already seen." Over 1.4 million people have already evacuated and gone inland. They have boarded up their properties and are now hoping Dennis does not unleash its power on their livelihoods. There are fears that Dennis is a precursor to a year of particularly destructive storms.

WARM-UPS

1. MOTHER NATURE: In pairs / groups, talk to each other about the power of nature. What are your experiences of the destructive forces of nature? Have you ever experienced hurricanes, typhoons, cyclones, earthquakes, floods or any other natural phenomena? What do you do when such disasters strike?

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Hurricanes / strong winds / natural disasters / disaster preparedness / devastation / Caribbean / Haiti / Cuba / Florida / livelihoods / properties

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. STORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "storm". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. NATURAL DISASTERS: In pairs / groups, talk about each of these natural disasters.

- Hurricanes / Typhoons / Cyclones
- Earthquakes
- Avalanches
- Floods
- Tsunamis / Tidal waves
- Volcanoes
- Drought
- Bush fires / Wild fires

5. HURRICANE OPINIONS: Students A agree with these opinions; students B disagree with them. Try to persuade each other of these opinions.

- a. The best thing to do when a hurricane comes is to stay put in your house.
- b. You should buy lots of water, batteries for your radio and tins of tuna fish.
- c. It's great to go for a walk during a big storm and experience the power of nature.
- d. When you hear a big storm is coming, you should take out more insurance.
- e. The safest thing is to board up the windows, take all of your valuables and leave town for 24 hours.
- f. If you live in an area that is hit by hurricanes, you should sell your house and move inland.
- g. I think it's too dangerous to live near the sea or the ocean.
- h. I can't leave my house because I'm worried about looters.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. An amazingly large hurricane will soon make landfall in America. | T / F |
| b. Winds near the eye of the storm are nearing 2,500 kph. | T / F |
| c. The hurricane is following the same path as an earlier lethal storm. | T / F |
| d. Hurricane Ivan caused \$7 million of damage last year. | T / F |
| e. Dennis developed in the Atlantic Ocean, near Iceland. | T / F |
| f. It is the most ferocious storm in a century and a half to hit the area. | T / F |
| g. Over 1.4 million people have fled their homes for shelter inland. | T / F |
| h. Dennis will probably be the only destructive storm of the year. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| a. upgraded | ferocious |
| b. catastrophic | vent |
| c. ominously | battered |
| d. vicious | calamitous |
| e. pummeled | hightailed it |
| f. traversed | businesses |
| g. evacuated | elevated |
| h. unleash | harbinger |
| i. livelihoods | forebodingly |
| j. precursor | crossed |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. an ever | path to its vicious predecessor |
| b. catastrophic | landfall Sunday evening |
| c. expected to make | to hit the region |
| d. following a very similar | 20 lives |
| e. Ivan pummeled | on their livelihoods |
| f. cost | strengthening Hurricane Dennis |
| g. leaving wide | of particularly destructive storms |
| h. the most ferocious storm | winds nearing 250 kph |
| i. unleash its power | into coastal communities |
| j. a precursor to a year | scale destruction in its trail |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

ODD WORD OUT: Strike through the incorrect word in the sets of three words in *italics*.

Hurricane Dennis menaces U.S. coast

BNE: An ever-strengthening Hurricane Dennis has been upgraded to a category 4 hurricane with *cataclysmic* / *catalyst* / *catastrophic* winds nearing 250 kph. It is moving *perilously* / *ominously* / *omnivorously* close to America's southern coastline and is expected to make landfall Sunday evening, local time. Fears are that Dennis will batter the same areas still trying to recover from the *lethal* / *lethargic* / *deadly* Hurricane Ivan, which caused widespread devastation in last year's hurricane season. Dennis is following a very similar *path* / *road* / *course* to its vicious predecessor. Ivan *drove* / *pummeled* / *reversed* into coastal communities last year, killing at least 90 people and causing \$7 billion of damage.

Dennis is the earliest category 4 hurricane to develop in the Caribbean. It has already *cost* / *spent* / *taken* 20 lives as it *crisscrossed* / *traversed* / *sidestepped* Haiti and Cuba, leaving wide scale destruction in its *wake* / *trial* / *trail*. Forecasters said Dennis is the most ferocious storm to hit the region in over 150 years. Florida Governor Jeb Bush said: "It is a storm that is huge....the devastation that could take place is something we have already seen." Over 1.4 million people have already *hightailed it* / *evacuated* / *abolished* and gone inland. They have boarded up their properties and are now hoping Dennis does not unleash its power on their livelihoods. There are fears that Dennis is a *harbinger* / *precursor* / *ancestor* to a year of particularly destructive storms.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**lethal**' and '**storm**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. ODD WORD OUT: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT STORM SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about hurricanes, typhoons, cyclones, storms, etc.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • ever | • earliest |
| • nearing | • traversed |
| • batter | • ferocious |
| • widespread | • evacuated |
| • path | • unleash |
| • pummeled | • precursor |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What adjective would you use to describe this article?
- d. What do you know about hurricanes?
- e. What's the difference between a hurricane, typhoon and cyclone?
- f. Do you think global warming has changed the frequency, power and pattern of hurricanes, typhoons etc?
- g. What's the best thing to do when a hurricane is approaching?
- h. What are the strongest winds you have ever felt?
- i. Do you think a huge hurricane is the scariest natural phenomenon?
- j. Have you ever experienced a natural disaster?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What would you do if a giant hurricane was on its way here?
- d. Why do you think people choose to live in areas frequently devastated by hurricanes?
- e. Do you live in a part of the world affected by natural disasters?
- f. What would you do if your house was blown down in a hurricane?
- g. Would/Do you pray to God to protect you during a natural disaster?
- h. If you evacuated your home, would you worry about looters?
- i. Is your community the type that would help each other in a natural disaster?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

HURRICANE:

In pairs / groups, create a disaster preparedness plan. Agree on what to do in the event of a huge (the most powerful ever) hurricane approaching your village / town / city.

	Most important thing	Second most important thing	Least important thing
One week before			
Two days before			
The day before			
The day of the hurricane			
The day after the hurricane			

After you have finished, change partners and tell each other about your ideas. Give each other advice on how to make your plans / ideas better.

Return to your original partner and incorporate the advice you received into making your plans better.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Hurricane Dennis menaces U.S. coast

BNE: An ever-strengthening Hurricane Dennis has been _____ category 4 hurricane with catastrophic winds nearing 250 kph. It is moving _____ close to America's southern coastline and is expected to make _____ Sunday evening, local time. Fears are that Dennis _____ the same areas still trying to recover from _____ Hurricane Ivan, which caused widespread devastation in last year's hurricane season. Dennis is following a very similar path _____ predecessor. Ivan _____ into coastal communities last year, killing at least 90 people and causing \$7 billion of damage.

Dennis is the earliest _____ hurricane to develop in the Caribbean. It has already cost 20 lives _____ Haiti and Cuba, leaving wide scale destruction in its trail. Forecasters said Dennis is the most _____ storm to hit the region in over 150 years. Florida Governor Jeb Bush said: "It is a storm that is huge....the _____ that could take place is something we have already seen." Over 1.4 million people have already _____ inland. They have _____ their properties and are now hoping Dennis does not _____ its power on their livelihoods. There are fears that Dennis is a _____ to a year of particularly destructive storms.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on Hurricane Dennis. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. STORMS: Create a fact sheet about storms and the differences between hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones. Show and explain your fact sheets to your classmates in your next lesson.

4. DIARY / JOURNAL ENTRY: Imagine you experienced a giant hurricane. Write a diary / journal entry explaining your 5-hour ordeal as the eye of the storm passed over your house. Read what you wrote to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T b. F c. T d. F e. F f. T g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. upgraded	elevated
b. catastrophic	calamitous
c. ominously	forebodingly
d. vicious	ferocious
e. pummeled	battered
f. traversed	crossed
g. evacuated	hightailed it
h. unleash	vent
i. livelihoods	businesses
j. precursor	harbinger

PHRASE MATCH:

a. an ever	strengthening Hurricane Dennis
b. catastrophic	winds nearing 250 kph
c. expected to make	landfall Sunday evening
d. following a very similar	path to its vicious predecessor
e. Ivan pummeled	into coastal communities
f. cost	20 lives
g. leaving wide	scale destruction in its trail
h. the most ferocious storm	to hit the region
i. unleash its power	on their livelihoods
j. a precursor to a year	of particularly destructive storms

ODD WORD OUT:

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Dennis is the earliest category 4 hurricane to develop in the Caribbean. It has already *cost* / *spent* / *taken* 20 lives as it *crisscrossed* / *traversed* / ~~sidestepped~~ Haiti and Cuba, leaving wide scale destruction in its *wake* / ~~trial~~ / *trail*. Forecasters said Dennis is the most ferocious storm to hit the region in over 150 years. Florida Governor Jeb Bush said: "It is a storm that is huge...the devastation that could take place is something we have already seen." Over 1.4 million people have already *hightailed it* / *evacuated* / ~~abolished~~ and gone inland. They have boarded up their properties and are now hoping Dennis does not unleash its power on their livelihoods. There are fears that Dennis is a *harbinger* / *precursor* / ~~ancestor~~ to a year of particularly destructive storms.