



Be Disaster Safe 3–5

Disaster Cycle

LESSON PLAN 1

The Cycle

Young children will be less confused and frightened about disasters if they learn that disasters are cyclical and that families can have a positive effect on the impact of the disaster.

Key Terms and Concepts

cycle	plan	respond
danger	prepare	responsible
disaster	ready	
mitigate	recover	

Purpose

To introduce the disaster cycle and define its cyclical steps

Objectives

The students will—

- Identify the cyclical steps of being prepared for disaster using an analogy.
- Create a collage to illustrate the disaster cycle based on actual or possible disasters.
- List familiar cycles and create and share illustrative examples. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- List and organize terms in the language of disaster and go on a media scavenger hunt to find and organize more vocabulary relating to real disasters.
- Use disaster vocabulary to write news reports that describe a particular disaster as it follows the cycle.
- Send home *Talk About Safety* with students to help families begin to “speak safety.” (Home Connection)
- Create a Disaster Cycle Thesaurus. (Linking Across the Curriculum)

Activities

“Cycles”

“Speak Safety”



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



Be Disaster Safe 3-5

LESSON PLAN 1 The Cycle

Materials

- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers
- Old magazines and newspapers
- Scissors, glue, markers and construction paper



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



"Cycles"

SET UP 10 minutes CONDUCT 45 minutes

Language Arts: Vocabulary; Science: Health

1.



Write the following words on the chalkboard or large chart paper:

PREPARE
RESPOND
RECOVER
MITIGATE

Have students offer definitions for each of the words as they might relate to a disaster. Then, work together to refine and illustrate the meanings of the terms by using them to analyze the following statement: "My math test was a disaster."

Answers will vary, but may include—

- **Prepare:** I studied the night before the test to prepare, but disaster struck anyway.
 - **Respond:** My teacher handed back the exam saying, "You'll have to do better than this."
 - **Recover:** My teacher and I both knew that I could do better. I was positive I would improve my math grade.
 - **Mitigate:** I made a plan: I scheduled regular study time and stayed for after-school tutorials. I didn't wait until the night before the test to study. I would be better prepared for the next test.
2. Write "Disaster Cycle" on the chalkboard. Discuss the meaning of the word "cycle" by having students consider cycles in which they participate regularly. For example, the cycle of getting ready for school, going to school and coming home each day; or the cycle of preparing, eating and cleaning up after dinner each evening. Discuss how change and repetition are part of every cycle.
3. Now, have students organize the disaster words cyclically, and then have students continue the analogy of the math test to illustrate the continuing cycle.

Answers will vary, but may include—

- **Prepare:** Since I had carried out my plan, I was well prepared when my teacher announced there would be a math test the next day. I had just reviewed the lessons that evening.
- **Respond:** It was a hard test, and my grade wasn't perfect, but it was still an "A."
- **Recover:** Math tests weren't disastrous anymore, but I really wanted to make 100.



Be Disaster Safe

3-5

LESSON PLAN 1

The Cycle

- **Mitigate:** I modified my plan. I joined a weekly study group to support my efforts. Next time, I would be even better prepared!

Discuss with the class: How have mitigation and preparation made a difference in the effects of the “disastrous” math test?

4. In class discussion, have students relate this cycle to real disasters, either natural or human-caused. Have students use markers, old magazines and newspapers to create collages that illustrate the disaster cycle based on real or possible disasters.



Wrap-Up

As students share their collages, make sure they illustrate and discuss each stage in the disaster cycle. Who responds to the disaster? What recovery is necessary? What mitigation is possible? How will this preparation affect the next disaster?



Linking Across the Curriculum

Science: Life Science and Earth Science

Create a class list of cycles students have studied in science. (Answers will vary, but may include—water cycle, food cycle, rock cycle, cycles of the moon and the life cycles of different plants and animals.) Next, have students use texts and other resources to select and illustrate one of these cycles.



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



Be Disaster Safe 3-5

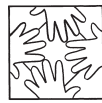
LESSON PLAN 1 The Cycle

Materials

- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers
- Internet resources or newspapers and magazines that cover recent or past disasters



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



"Speak Safety"

SET UP 10 minutes **CONDUCT** two 45-minute sessions

Language Arts: Vocabulary, Media Literacy and Writing; Science: Health

-  Have students compile a list of terms related to disaster. Answers will vary, but may include words that relate to preparedness and mitigation, disaster, response and recovery. As a class, organize these words based on the disaster cycle.
-  Have students working in small groups conduct a media scavenger hunt to discover more words used in reporting a disaster and its aftermath. Have them organize these terms according to the disaster cycle.



Wrap-Up

Have students share their words, adding to and refining the class list.



Working individually or in small teams, have students incorporate their disaster vocabulary into news reports that describe a particular disaster (real or fictional) as it follows the cycle.



Home Connection

Send home a copy of *Talk About Safety*. Have students discuss the words related to the disaster cycle with their families.

Challenge families to find new words as they read, watch and listen to media coverage about disaster. As a class, discuss whether talking about safety and focusing on the disaster cycle can make a difference in being safe. Why or why not?



Linking Across the Curriculum

Language Arts: Vocabulary; Science: Health

Have students create a Disaster Cycle Thesaurus. If needed, describe and discuss what a thesaurus is and have students define the terms "synonyms" and "antonyms." Have student teams categorize words according to the disaster cycle stages: mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover. Have them continue to add new synonyms and antonyms as they find them. Have teams share their words, discussing how they are related.



Talk About Safety

Page 1 of 1

Name _____

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Every day we read and hear about disasters that have struck around the world. As a family, talk about the words in the news and place them within the stages of the Disaster Cycle below. How were families prepared? What happened and how did the community respond? How is the community recovering? What is being done so that the community is better prepared?

Talking about safety with your family now can help everyone learn to prepare and be safer if disaster strikes.

Talk together. It's the first step in taking action.

Thank you.

