



Be Disaster Safe 6–8

Disaster Cycle



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

LESSON PLAN 4

Recover

Young people can accept that disasters occur, but they need to know what will be done to help the people of the community survive and recover and to prevent a repeat of the disaster's damaging effects.

Key Terms and Concepts

cleanup	disaster	recover
community	hazardous	
debris	mitigate	

Purpose

To help the students discover ways people and their communities recover after a disaster and become stronger and better prepared

Objectives

The students will—

- Describe the immediate and long-term effects of a disaster within the community and what would be needed for recovery.
- Research and report on recovery efforts in communities after specific disasters. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Read the story of Scrappy from *Pets and Disasters: Happy Endings* and outline and write their own pet survival story with a happy ending.
- Work with their families to create a list of things to do together to ensure pet safety during a disaster. (Home Connection)
- Read and discuss the stories of pet survival and recovery after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Write the script for a new survivor series, “Survivor of—” to present disaster recovery lessons applicable to everyone. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Research to write a class definition of “mitigation.”
- Use the Federal Emergency Management Agency to discover “Mitigation Best Practices” across the United States and evaluate these projects to determine how they might be appropriate for their community.
- Determine a specific mitigation project that could be implemented in their community and write a proposal to local authorities.



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- Interview a representative from the American Red Cross or their local emergency agency to learn about the mitigation projects under way in their area.

Activities

“Disaster: Impact and Recovery”

“Happy Endings”

“Mitigation: Best Practices”



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Materials

Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers



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"Disaster: Impact and Recovery"

SET UP 5 minutes CONDUCT two 45–60 minutes

Social Studies: Personal Responsibility and Civics

1. Write the name of a type of disaster that might affect your community on the chalkboard. Guide the students to create a list that describes the immediate impact of such a disaster.

For example: Hurricane

- Wind and water damage to homes and buildings
- Beach erosion
- Floods
- Power outages
- The need for shelters
- Contamination of the water supply
- Store and school closings
- Disruption of garbage and sewer services
- Strain on emergency personnel and services
- Flooded and damaged infrastructure—dams, bridges, roads and culverts
- Breakdown of communications

2. Next, divide the class into small groups, assigning each group one or two items from the class list. Have them consider the long-term effect on the community and what would be needed to help the community recover.

For example: Wind and water damage to homes and buildings

- The damage must be assessed to see if the structures are sound enough to be repaired and reoccupied. If so, funding for repairs needs to be obtained. Repair crews need to be available. In some cases, repair crews from other states will be required. Depending on the amount of damage and the complexity of the repairs, this step could take a lot of time.
- If structures cannot be repaired, anything that can be salvaged must be taken so that crews can quickly demolish what is left standing. After demolition, all the debris must be removed. If local landfills are overloaded, crews must haul debris over long distances. Environmental concerns relating to the removal and disposal of debris must be addressed. New housing must be built, often using funding from government sources. While waiting for insurers and funding, families need to find temporary shelter. If there is no shelter in the community, families may move away to areas where they can find homes and jobs.
- The community could lose many businesses and families, decreasing its tax base and slowing recovery.



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Wrap-Up

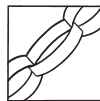
Ask the groups to report on their determinations concerning impact and recovery. Have others in the class question or add to the lists when necessary.



As a class, consider the problems that would occur and determine what the community would need to help make recovery happen. Answers will vary, but may include—

- An organized effort among federal agencies, relief organizations and community government.
- The recruitment of needed workers from the community and from other communities.
- Equipment and repair crews for infrastructure and public utilities.
- Ongoing shelter for those whose homes are destroyed.
- Tax help for businesses trying to get started again.

Ask the students if it's possible to speculate on the time that might be necessary for recovery. What must citizens remember? (Answers will vary, but may include—It would be difficult to estimate the recovery time because of the amount of damage and the number of problems that could be faced. Recovery takes time, but it can happen as long as everyone cooperates.)



Linking Across the Curriculum

Language Arts: Media Literacy; Social Studies: Community

Invite small groups of students to research and report on different types of recovery efforts in communities after a specific disaster. For example, a group might check online news coverage about rebuilding levees after Hurricane Katrina or recovering forest areas after wildland fires in southern California. To find major weather disasters in the United States over the past 25 years, have students check the National Climatic Data Center at <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/reports/billionz.html>.



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Materials

- One sheet of chart paper and markers for each team
- *Pets and Disasters: Happy Endings*, 1 copy per student



Visit the American Red Cross Web site
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"Happy Endings"

SET UP 5 minutes CONDUCT 45–60 minutes

Language Arts: Reading and Writing

1. Divide the class into small brainstorm teams, giving each a sheet of chart paper and markers. Give the teams three to five minutes to write brief descriptions of what would be seen in a community in a successful disaster recovery. (Answers will vary, but may include—All debris hauled away; homes under repair and new trees and shrubs planted; roads and bridges open; families reunited; and signs of new construction in the areas hardest hit.)

When the time has elapsed, call the groups together to share their ideas.

2. Explain to the students that there are many stories of successful recovery from disaster. Perhaps some of the most amazing are the stories of pet rescues and people and their pets reuniting. Distribute *Pets and Disasters: Happy Endings* to the students. Ask them to read and then discuss the story of Scrappy.



Wrap-Up

As a class, decide on the list of essential ingredients for any pet survival story with a happy ending.

(Answers will vary, but may include—the disaster; the reason for the family's separation; what happened to the pet; how the pet was rescued; and how the family was reunited.)

Have the students use the ingredients to write an outline for exciting pet survival stories based on their own or fictional pets. You may want them to choose disasters that are most likely to happen in your area.

Divide the class into writing support teams to have the students review and critique each other's outlines. Once the outlines have been approved, allow the students to complete their stories. As they write, remind them that realistic detail makes a story more exciting and suspenseful.



Home Connection

Have the students share their pet survival stories with their families, and then discuss what they need to do to ensure that their pets are safe during and after a disaster. Have them refer to Make a Plan in the Background or access various Web sites to find tips on making their own pet disaster plan. Animal Safety from the American Red Cross at <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/animalsafety.html> is an excellent place to begin.



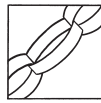
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Linking Across the Curriculum

Language Arts: Reading

Many pets and people were separated during and after Katrina hit New Orleans and the Gulf. Many rescue workers looked for and cared for pets in order to reunite them with their families. Your students can read some of these stories and find tips for taking care of pets during and after disasters in these and other books.

Rescued: Saving Animals from Disaster by Allen and Linda Anderson (New World Library, 2006).

Not Left Behind: Rescuing the Pets of New Orleans by Best Friends Animal Society (Yorkville Press, 2006).

Language Arts: Writing and Media Literacy; Social Studies: Community; Science: Health

Have the students work in teams to create a new reality TV show: “Survivor of _____” (name a natural disaster). Their scripts should reflect why the winner was able to survive the disaster:

- How was he or she prepared?
- What emotional or physical qualities made him or her most resilient and able to bounce back from disaster?
- What appropriate actions were taken?
- What emotions were exhibited?
- What was key to a successful outcome?

As the students share their scripts, have them discuss lessons on disaster recovery that are applicable to everyone.



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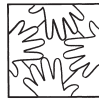
LESSON PLAN 4 Recover

Materials

- Dictionaries and/or online access
- Background from other *Masters of Disaster* modules, such as *Earthquakes*, *Hurricanes*, or *Tornadoes*, appropriate for your community (one type per small group of students)





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“Mitigation: Best Practices”

SET UP 15 minutes CONDUCT 60 minutes

Language Arts: Research and Vocabulary; Social Studies: Community

-  Ask the students to use dictionaries or go online to discover meanings for “mitigate” and/or “mitigation.” Have them look for the use of the word in news stories by clicking into a newspaper online and searching for the terms or trying an Internet search of “mitigation in the news.” Instruct them to keep track of the many different contexts in which the term is used.
-  Next, have the students share their findings with the class. Based on the information, create a class definition for “disaster mitigation.”

TEACHING NOTE This definition from the Florida Division of Emergency Management is easy for students to understand:

“Disaster mitigation is any action taken to eliminate or minimize the impact of a disaster on people, property and the environment.”

(<http://redcross.tallytown.com/library/DisasterMitigation-AGuideForCommunityBasedOrganizations.pdf>)

3. Divide the class into research groups. Each group will use FEMA’s “Mitigation Best Practices” (<http://www.fema.gov/mitigationss/mitigationOverview.do>) to discover community mitigation projects across the United States—flood-proofing a building in Key West, Florida; increasing underground wiring in Nobles County, Minnesota; implementing building codes to protect homes from wildfires in Los Angeles County, California.

Focusing on hazards that might affect their community, have the students select one or two mitigation projects to share with the class, and provide the purpose of the project and a brief description of how it was implemented successfully.



Wrap-Up

As the groups share their findings, have the class evaluate the project for their own community by answering the following questions:



- Why might this project be appropriate for our area?
- Who could implement such a project—private businesses, families, government agencies?
- What adaptations might be necessary? Why?

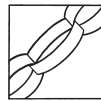


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As a class, determine one or two mitigation projects you would like to propose to local emergency management officials. The class proposal must include a description of the project, the rationale for implementing it, examples of how it was used successfully in other places and suggestions for community partnerships to make it happen.

TEACHING NOTE If your students need help in identifying mitigation activities appropriate for your community, divide them into small groups and distribute selections from the Backgrounds of appropriate *Masters of Disaster* modules.



Linking Across the Curriculum

Social Studies: Community; Language Arts: Communication

Invite a representative from your local Red Cross and/or the community emergency management committee to come to the class to discuss the mitigation projects going on in your community now. Make sure the students have prepared interview questions in advance.



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Pets and Disasters: Happy Endings

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Name _____

After a disaster, there are many stories that highlight successes in preparedness and recovery. Some of the most wonderful stories are about pets that survived and are reunited with their families.

Here's a true story about Scrappy, a skinny, scared dog rescued in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina by Pasado's Animal Rescue.

Scrappy's Tale

Tremendous flooding followed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Many families who had thought they would be "right back" after evacuation were not allowed back into their neighborhoods or homes for weeks, or even longer.

Scrappy was left at home because his family was unable to take him with them. Shelters didn't allow pets and they couldn't get to an emergency contact outside the city. Animal rescue teams began searching the city for stranded pets as soon as city authorities gave them the go-ahead.

It was several weeks after the storm had hit. The volunteers from Pasado's Animal Rescue team had been searching all day around flooded homes that were dank, dark, falling down or unsafe to go into.

One rescuer heard a rustling sound that continued to come from a home in a badly damaged New Orleans' neighborhood. He and his team decided to break into the front door to investigate.

There, behind a washer and dryer, they found Scrappy. He was scared and skinny. He had gone for weeks without food. Quickly, he was bundled up and on his way to Pasado's Safe Haven. The rescue team took a photo of Scrappy that, along with the address of where he was found, would help them track Scrappy's owner. Scrappy was also assigned a number. This number was left on a card tacked onto the house, along with contact information, helping returning evacuees find their rescued pup.





Pets and Disasters: Happy Endings

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Scrappy and many other rescued pets were flown to California. There, Scrappy was cared for, both physically and emotionally.

After three long months of searching, Scrappy's owners were found in Monroe, Louisiana, where they had settled when their home in New Orleans was demolished. Scrappy was brought back to Louisiana and immediately jumped into his owners' arms. Everybody was crying at this very happy ending.

(Adapted from "Pasado Rescue Happy Endings" at

<http://www.pasadosafehaven.org/KATRINA/HAPPYENDING/HappyEnding.htm>.)

Directions: Talk about Scrappy's Tale. What makes it a good story of survival after a disaster? List the essential ingredients. Now, use the list to write an outline for your own pet survival tale with a happy ending.

