



Be Disaster Safe 3-5

Disaster Cycle



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

LESSON PLAN 4

Recover

Children can accept that disasters occur, but they need to know what will be done to clean up, to help the people of the community and to prevent a repeat of the disaster.

Key Terms and Concepts

cleanup
community
debris

disaster
hazardous
mitigate

recover
resilient

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—

- Organize a school cleanup and, if possible, implement and time it.
- Suggest what the community would need to clean up if it had to recover from a disaster and discuss the amount of time the cleanup might take and why.
- Discuss community recovery, focusing on true stories of pets during and after disasters.
- 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)
- Research to write a class definition of “mitigation.”
- Consider the types of disaster most likely to strike their community and discuss the actions individuals and the community could take to mitigate the effects of the disaster.
- Interview a representative from the American Red Cross or their community emergency agency to discover the mitigation projects under way in their area.
- Play with springs of different sizes to understand the meaning of “resiliency.” (Linking Across the Curriculum)



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LESSON PLAN 4 Recover

Activities

“Recovery Takes Time”
“Happy Endings”
“Mitigate”



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Materials

Several pages of chart paper
and markers of different colors



"Recovery Takes Time"

SET UP 15 minutes CONDUCT 45-60 minutes

Social Studies: Personal Responsibility and Civics; Science: Health

1. Discuss with the students the kinds of things that might need to be cleaned up if a disaster had occurred around the school. Would the cleanup be different for different types of disaster? (Yes, for example, if the school had suffered a flood, there would be mud and water-damaged items that we would need to clean or throw away, but if an earthquake had occurred, there would be broken and fallen items that we would have to pick up and repair.)
2. Ask the students to look around the classroom. Are there some cleanup jobs waiting to be done even though a disaster has not occurred? (Answers will vary, but there are almost always some areas of the classroom that could be cleaned up or straightened up.)
3. Guide the students to divide the entire school and grounds into areas for cleanup—the classrooms, cafeteria, hallways, gym and outdoor areas. Write the name of one of these areas on each page of chart paper. Divide the class into small groups and assign a different area to each.
4. Have the students take notebooks to their assigned area to list what needs to be cleaned up. They can divide the tasks into "things students can do" and "things adults must take care of." Next to each task, have them estimate the amount of time it might take. As the groups complete their cleanup reviews, have them transfer the information on the chart paper, using markers of different colors to indicate student and adult jobs and providing an estimated time for each task.
5. Post the chart paper task lists around the room. As a class, discuss the jobs that need to be done.
 - What type of organization is needed?
 - Who should the school recruit to help?
 - What tools are needed?
 - What is the total length of time required?

TEACHING NOTE If possible, work with the administration, maintenance and other classrooms to implement a school cleanup as designed by the students. You will need protective gloves, large plastic garbage bags, cleanup tools and timers to test the students' planning.



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Wrap-Up

Have the students discuss what makes their cleanup plan most efficient. (Tasks are determined and divided before cleanup begins; cleanup crews would cooperate but concentrate on different areas; equipment could be shared; a difficult or dangerous cleanup would be assigned to adults or personnel with expertise and tools; and everyone would help each other.)

Now, as a class, talk about what types of things would have to be cleaned up if the community had to recover from a disaster. Answers will vary, but may include—

- Trees, tree limbs, dirt and leaves strewn over the ground and the streets.
- Fallen power lines, causing power failure and serious hazards.
- Flooded areas.
- Homes without roofs, water or power.
- Spills of dangerous chemicals.
- Stray animals wandering in the streets.
- Broken windows with the bits of glass all about.

How would the cleanup plan be similar to their own plans? How would it be different? (Organization and cleanup crews would still be assigned, but there would be a great many different areas to clean up and much special expertise and equipment required.)

About how long do they believe the community cleanup would take? Why? Answers will vary, but may include—

- It would be difficult to estimate time because of the amount of debris to be cleared away and damage to be repaired; the number of crews available; and the different expertise and equipment necessary for the cleanup.
- There would be large quantities of debris to haul away, and it might be difficult to maneuver trucks into some areas, or there might not be enough trucks to haul away all the debris quickly.
- If parts of houses and buildings were also in the street, special equipment would be needed and there might not be enough equipment to take care of everything at the same time.
- Water pipes, roads and bridges take time to fix and there might not be enough equipment or new parts to fix them right away.
- Floodwaters take time to recede, and until that happens, people can't even begin to clean up.

Considering the difficulties, what is the most important thing for citizens to remember after a disaster? (Recovery takes time, but it will happen as long as everyone cooperates.)



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Materials

- Chart paper and markers for each team
- *Pets and Disasters: Happy Endings*, 1 copy per student



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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. Allow 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 being repaired and new trees and shrubs planted; roads and bridges open; families reunited; and signs of new construction in areas hit the hardest.)

After time is up, 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.



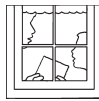
Wrap-Up

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. Consider confining the students’ choice of disaster to those 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 their pets are safe during and after a disaster. Ask them to read the pet safety information in the Background (under Be Disaster Safe: At Home) or look online to find tips on making their own pet disaster plan. Check the Web site of the American Red Cross at <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/animalsafety.html>.

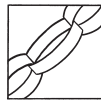


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Linking Across the Curriculum

Language Arts: Reading

Many pets and people were separated when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the Gulf Coast and afterward. 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 the Best Friends Animal Society (Yorkville Press, 2006)



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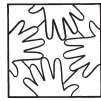
LESSON PLAN 4 Recover

Materials

- Dictionaries or Internet 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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"Mitigate"

SET UP 15 minutes CONDUCT 60 minutes

Language Arts: Research and Vocabulary; Social Studies: Community

-  Ask the students to use dictionaries or the Internet to find definitions for "mitigate" or "mitigation." Have them look for the use of the word in news stories by clicking into an online version of a newspaper and searching for the terms or trying an Internet search of "mitigation in the news." Have them 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."

The following Web site from Disaster Florida contains a much broader view of mitigation and a great deal of useful information:

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



Wrap-Up

Have the students list the types of disasters most likely to occur in their community.



After completing the list, have them discuss the types of action people could take to eliminate or minimize the impact of these disasters. For example:

- If your area could experience earthquakes, bolting bookshelves to the walls mitigates the danger of having these heavy pieces of furniture and their contents crash to the floor, causing damage or breakage or harm to people.
- Near the shore in a hurricane-prone area, building and retrofitting homes to withstand high winds, improving building codes to require hurricane-resistant construction, and improving land-use codes to restrict building in high risk areas help to minimize damage.
- If your community is on the urban-wildland interface, using fire-resistant building materials and design and maintaining fire-resistant landscape safety zones around houses could stop wildland fires from destroying homes.



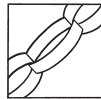
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- If parts of your community lie on a floodplain, regulations to restrict building in the floodplain and building levees, dams or canals to divert the flow of water could reduce flood damage.

As they go around the school or through the community, have the students find items to add to a class list of school and community mitigation activities.

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 chapter of the American Red Cross or the community emergency management agency to come to the class to discuss mitigation projects currently under way in your community. Make sure the students prepare interview questions in advance.

Science: Physical Science; Mathematics: Classification; Language Arts: Vocabulary

For this activity, you will need one set of springs of various gauges and resiliency for each team. These are available from hardware stores and science supply stores.



Write the word “resilient” on the board and tell students they are going to define the word with some hands-on experimentation. Have student teams pull and stretch their springs to place them in order from those that are easily bent out of shape to those that readily spring back into shape. After all the teams have settled on their classifications, make the statement, “It is important to be resilient in order to recover from disaster.” Now, have students use what they have learned from the spring experiment to define “resilient.” (Able to return to the original shape after being stretched or pulled; able to spring back from disaster or difficult situations.)



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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 were later 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 the 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.

