

Name: _____

Hurricanes

Imagine a storm so big it could cover multiple states, with winds as fast as a racing car and rain that lasts for days. You are thinking of a hurricane! These massive storms form over warm ocean waters and are the most powerful storms on Earth.

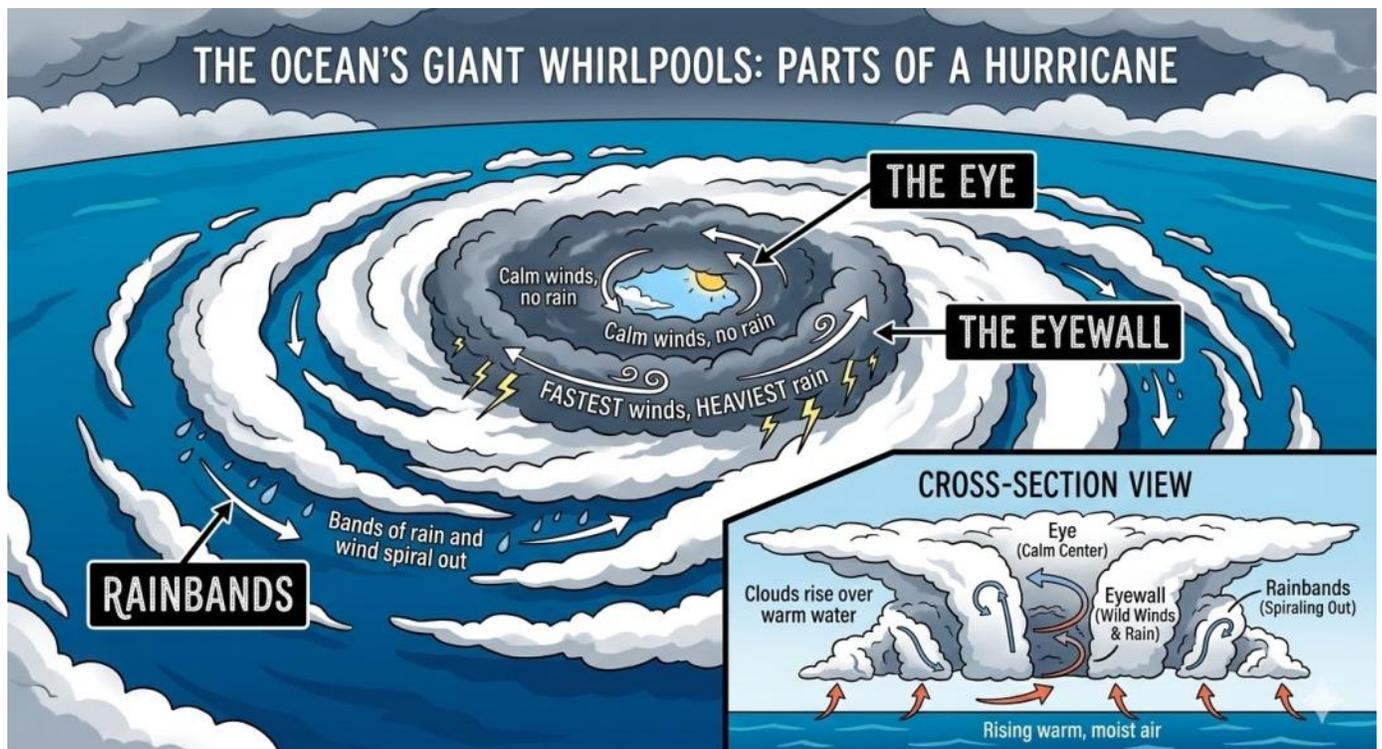
How Do They Get Their Power?

A hurricane is like a giant engine that runs on warm, wet air. They always start over warm tropical oceans near the equator. The heat from the sun makes the ocean water evaporate, turning it into warm, moist air that rises quickly. This rising air creates big clouds. More warm air rushes in to fill the empty space, and the whole system starts to spin. It's like when you pull the plug in a bathtub and the water creates a little whirlpool.

Parts of a Hurricane

If you were looking at a hurricane from space, it would look like a giant white spiral spinning over the ocean. It has three main parts:

- **The Eye:** This is the very center of the storm. Surprisingly, the eye is calm. There is no rain, the wind is light, and sometimes the sun even peeks out!
- **The Eyewall:** This is the scariest part! The eyewall is the ring of clouds right around the eye. Here, the winds are the fastest and the rain is the heaviest.
- **Rainbands:** These are long bands of clouds and rain that spiral outward from the center.





Name: _____

The Dangers

Hurricanes can cause a lot of damage, but not just from wind. The most dangerous part is actually called the storm surge. As the hurricane travels toward land, its powerful winds push ocean water toward the coast. This surge can rise up like a giant wall of water, causing terrible flooding far inland. They also bring heavy, relentless rain that floods rivers and streams.

Measuring and Naming

To help people prepare, scientists measure the speed of the winds to decide how strong a hurricane is. They use a scale from Category 1 to Category 5.

- Category 1: The winds are strong, but do not cause major damage to houses.
- Category 5: This is the highest category. These catastrophic storms destroy nearly everything in their path.

Because many hurricanes can form each year, scientists give them names (like Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Sandy). This makes it easier to track them and tell people which storm is coming.

Staying Safe

The key to staying safe is preparation. If a hurricane warning is given, it means a hurricane is expected soon. Families should have an evacuation plan, which means they know where to go to get away from the water. It's also important to have a kit with water, food, flashlights, and batteries.

1. Based on the passage, why do hurricanes form over warm water?
 - A. Warm water gives the storm the energy it needs to form and grow.
 - B. Warm water makes the storm spin clockwise instead of counter-clockwise.
 - C. Hurricanes are just giant whirlpools that start in bathtubs.
 - D. Cold water creates more lightning, which stops the storm.
2. In the sentence, "They always start over warm tropical oceans near the equator," what does the word tropical mean?
 - A. A place that is very windy and noisy.
 - B. A very cold place where snow falls all year.
 - C. A large city with many tall buildings.
 - D. A place near the ocean with warm, hot temperatures.



Name: _____

3. In the section "The Dangers," what is a storm surge compared to?

- A. A gentle river.
- B. A giant wall of water.
- C. Heavy, relentless rain.
- D. A racing car.

4. Why is the center of a hurricane (the eye) so unusual?

- A. It is the only part of the storm that spins.
- B. It is the place where the winds are the absolute fastest.
- C. It is the strongest and most dangerous part of the storm.
- D. It is surprisingly calm, with light wind and no rain.

5. How is this passage structured?

- A. The passage compares a hurricane to a tornado.
- B. The passage explains the steps to build a safety kit.
- C. The passage lists different hurricanes in the order they happened.
- D. The passage uses headings to organize different types of information about hurricanes.

6. If your town gets a hurricane warning and your family begins packing an emergency kit, what can you infer?

- A. Your family is going on a surprise vacation to the beach.
- B. Your family is preparing for the possibility of a powerful storm.
- C. Your family thinks the hurricane warning is a joke.
- D. Your family is moving to a different state where there are no storms.

7. Which detail from the text best supports the idea that the eyewall is the most destructive part of a hurricane?

- A. "The eye is the very center of the storm."
- B. "Winds are the fastest and the rain is the heaviest."
- B. "They always start over warm tropical oceans."
- D. "Scientists give them names (like Hurricane Katrina)."

8. What conclusion can you draw about a Category 5 hurricane?

- A. People do not need to evacuate for a Category 5 storm.
- B. It will cause very minimal damage, only breaking a few tree branches.
- C. It is an extremely dangerous and life-threatening storm that requires careful preparation.
- D. Category 5 storms are only scary because of their names, not their winds.