



Washing Away

LOSING LOUISIANA



WHAT'S YOUR FEMA NUMBER?

AN ACTIVITY FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
DEVELOPED BY CLAUDIA FOWLER

OVERVIEW:

As a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, thousands of residents fled their homes and made their way to towns and cities across the entire United States. Some stayed behind by choice: others stayed because they had no means to leave. For a variety of reasons, many will not return and some who returned may leave again.

GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS:

Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (Science)

Grade 5

- SI-M-A1 GLE 2 Identify problems, factors, and questions that must be considered in a scientific investigation (SI-M-A1)
- SI-M-A3 GLE 7 Record observations using methods that complement investigations (eg. journals, tables, charts) (SI-M-A3)
- SI-M-A3 GLE 8 Use consistency and precision in data collection, analysis, and reporting (SI-M-A3)
- SI-M-A4 GLE 11 Construct, use, and interpret appropriate graphical representations to collect, record, and report data (e.g., tables, charts, circle graphs, bar and line graphs, diagrams, scatter plots, symbols) (SI-M-A4)

Grade 7

- LS-M-D2 GLE 34 Explain how environmental factors impact survival of a population (LS-M-D2)

High School

- SI-H-A3 GLE 6 Use technology when appropriate to enhance laboratory investigations and presentations of findings (SI-H-A3)
- SE-H-A3 GLE 4 Determine the effects of limiting factors on a population and describe the concept of carrying capacity (SE-H-A3)

Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (Social Studies)

Grade 8

- G-1C-M2 GLE 10 Analyze the population characteristics and other demographic information about the United States and Louisiana, including rates of increase/decrease for demographic variables (G-1C-M2)
- G-1D-M2 GLE 15 Analyze the benefits and challenges of the Louisiana physical environments on its inhabitants (e.g., flooding, soil, climate conducive to growing certain plants) (G-1D-M2)

High School

- G-1C-H3 GLE 28 Compare, contrast, and analyze the distribution, growth rates, and other demographic characteristics of human populations in various countries or regions (G-1C-H3)



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SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

These activities should be conducted after the students have had some instruction on population dynamics.

PART 1:

The cities across the country that are now home to those who fled Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the towns that were left behind, the individuals who fled, and those who stayed: all have been impacted by these forces of nature, the hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

1. Show ***Washing Away*** video clips of Leah Chase (17:35-20:34), Preston Doré. (29:25-31:50), the Domingue family (26:55-29:23), and Marlon Horton (5:54-8:37)). Ask students to discuss whether or not they think that these individuals will rebuild or permanently leave their original homes, based upon their comments. Students should give reasons for their answers. Students should also discuss what they would do if they were facing these conditions.

Note: *Teachers who have students from these impacted areas should allow time for students to share what they and their families faced. It would be appropriate to set a time limit for students to share their stories.*

2. Individual students or student groups should look through resources that focus on the impact of the population shifts associated with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and select a topic to research such as the impact on:
 - a) those individuals who “rode out the storm” and never left
 - b) those who left and returned
 - c) a particular city that received large numbers of storm victims
 - d) a particular aspect/service of a city such as the school system, transportation, and housing
 - e) a city (New Orleans) or area (such as St. Bernard Parish and Cameron Parish) that lost large populations
 - f) locations in the Cameron-Holly Beach area
3. Students should make a brief presentation to the class based upon their research. Encourage students to be objective in their reporting and to include both the positive and negative aspects. Students should display data of population shifts in a graphic organizer.

In most cases these are very complex issues that don’t have a single “simple” answer; nevertheless, students should be able to get generalized data.

4. Show ***Washing Away*** video clips of Leah Chase (50:16-53:50), Preston Doré, (45:00-47:40) the Domingue family (42:39-44:50), and Marlon Horton (40:38-42:36). Students should determine if there is a clear-cut decision by each of these individuals to return to their homes or to leave. Discuss why they think the specific individual made the choice they did.

PART 2:

1. Inform students a poll was taken (July 2006) in the Southern coastal states by a team from Harvard University. One of the questions asked of those polled was would they evacuate for a hurricane, if ordered to do so. (**Note:** *Do not reveal the findings to the students at this time.*) Ask students to jot down on a piece of paper what their decision would be if they were given the order to evacuate and to give at least one reason as to why they made the choice they did. In small groups, students should discuss their choices with one another. Students may decide to change their choice after the group discussion.
2. Student groups should report back for a full class discussion and determine the top reasons given for each choice (to leave or to stay).
3. Provide students with a copy of, or access, to the data found in the Harvard report.
http://www.usatoday.com/weather/2006-07-20-hurricane-survey_x.htm

Note: *The study reveals that one in four people in Southern coastal states who were polled said they would not evacuate for a hurricane, even if ordered to do so. This is interesting in light of the fact that the survey was conducted in July of this year (2006) after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The complete report is also available. <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hurricane/topline.doc>*

4. Students should be given time to comment on the results of the study and compare to the class findings.
5. As a class project, students should design a questionnaire to survey individuals as to whether they would stay or leave if a mandatory evacuation were given. Students may also want to ask other questions, such as what items they would take, how far they think they would go from their home.

Note: *Students should work together to develop a common survey to be used by the entire class. Students should also determine the logistics and methodology of conducting the survey and should consider such factors as:*

- (a) *how to approach and what to say to individuals they are polling*
- (b) *what information will be solicited*
- (c) *how to record the information, i.e. will the student ask the questions or will they ask the individual to fill out a form*
- (d) *how many surveys should be taken, is anonymity important, and other protocol measures. A PTA meeting, sports event or other school gathering would be an opportune time to conduct the survey.*

6. Once the data is collected, students should record, interpret, and display their findings as compared to that in the Harvard study. The school newspaper, local newspaper, or television station may be interested in the results.

Note: *Be sure to get administrative approval before conducting the survey.*

RESOURCES:

Brookings Institute, *Katrina and Rita Impacts on Gulf Coast Populations: First Census Findings* provides additional information. At the home page, the report is found under **Analysis and Commentary**.
http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/200512_Katrinaindex.htm

NOAA: This provides an interactive tool that allows the user to type in a particular state and the parish to illustrate the population change by decade from 1900-2002. A graph is generated that illustrates the results
<http://hurricane.csc.noaa.gov/hurricanes/pop.jsp>

The Greater New Orleans Community Data Center: <http://www.gnocdc.org/>

Claritas: Very recent data on population estimates associated with the hurricanes.
http://www.claritas.com/claritas/Default.jsp?ci=1&pn=hurricane_katrina_data

Official web site for the State of Louisiana. Click on **Louisiana Demographics** for additional links.
<http://www.la.gov/>

NOLA: Times-Picayune: Some of the data has tracked more than 130,000 students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. **The Katrina Files** from the **Times Picayune** lists numerous related articles and graphics. Scroll down to July 2006 and click on the article, **Displaced Students Across the Nation**, and August 2006 for the graphic **New Orleans Population Drops Off**.
<http://www.nola.com/katrina/graphics/>

A **New York Times** graphic that shows the dispersion of individuals in every state.
http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2005/10/02/national/nationalspecial/20051002diaspora_graphic.html

EVALUATION:

It is suggested that students and teacher design a rubric for assessing the project-based presentations. Teachers can find assistance in creating such rubrics at various sites on the web such as **Rubistar**.
<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>