



Natural Disasters

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Science
Grades 9-12



Introduction

Natural disasters are scary, but which is the most dangerous of them all? Students will research various natural disasters and form an opinion on which is the most dangerous. They will create an essay from the point-of-view of the natural disaster as to why that is the most dangerous of them all.

Learning Objectives

([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1](#)) Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Materials Needed

- [Pre-writing graphic organizer](#)
- [Writer's checklist](#)
- Chromebook/tablet/computer

Procedure

1. Brainstorm various natural disasters. Some examples include:
 - Floods
 - Hurricanes
 - Tornadoes
 - Volcanic eruptions
 - Tsunamis
 - Earthquakes
2. Have the students research various natural disasters. Make sure to discuss which websites and resources are valid and substantial, and which ones to avoid.
3. Have students fill in a graphic organizer to organize ideas. This pre-writing activity will be used to guide students in the creation of their essays.
4. Have students begin to create their essays. The first part will be the introduction. In the introduction, students should include:

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- The introduction should “hook” or grab the attention of the reader.
 - Students should state their argument in the opening paragraph.
5. Have students create the body of their essays. There should be at least three paragraphs of supporting details.
 - These should all be statements that support the student’s argument.
 - Include a topic sentence in each paragraph.
 - Each supporting detail should be backed with facts to support the argument. Students can use any of the links provided, as well as any additional facts they find in their research.
 - Opinions and personal views should be included throughout, but must be supported with factual evidence.
 6. Have students create the conclusion for their essay.
 - Have a topic sentence that restates the argument and facts that support it.
 - Have a strong last sentence, or “clincher”, in the essay. This is what will leave a lasting impression on the readers.
 7. Teachers will conference with students as they create their writing piece. If teachers do not wish to conference with the students, the teacher can monitor the work being completed and help on an as-needed basis.
 8. When the rough draft of the essay is completed, students should have one to two peers edit the persuasive essay and make the appropriate changes.
 9. Students will make the final edits and create the final draft of their essay.

Optional Extension Assignments

- **Class Debate:** Students can prepare for a debate on which natural disaster is the most dangerous. It will be fun to share these essays as students are stepping into the shoes of the natural disaster itself!
- [Stop Disasters Game!](#)
- [Disaster Detector](#)
- [Natural Hazards Science Game](#)

Evaluation

You should use the writing rubric that your district requires to grade the writing. There are many classwork grades that you can take from this writing assignment including the checklist and the rough draft.