

Unit Overview: Parent Guide

Hurricanes, Grade 4

What is the goal of this unit?

- Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts to learn about hurricanes and their impact on Louisiana. Your child will also explore how history involves the sharing of memories.

What topics and skills is your fourth grader learning in this unit?

- Memory
- Hurricanes
- Firsthand accounts
- Secondhand accounts
- First-person narrative
- Narrative writing

What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay in response to the prompt: *Write a narrative about a character who experiences a hurricane firsthand.*
- **Extension Task:** Your child will extend her learning by researching a hurricane that affected the coast of Louisiana and writing a report about that hurricane.

Your child will read these texts, listen to these audio clips, and study these pieces of art:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
<i>Hurricanes: Earth's Mightiest Storms</i>	Patricia Lauber	Main text of the unit
<i>My Louisiana Sky</i>	Kimberly Willis Holt	Group text
<i>I Survived Hurricane Katrina, 2005</i>	Lauren Tarshis	Student text
<i>Letters from Katrina: Stories of Hope and Inspiration</i>	Mark Hogg and Kim Lemaire	Group text
<i>Call Me Hero</i>	Claire Bateman	Group text

<i>Surviving Hurricanes (Children's True Stories)</i>	Elizabeth Raum	Student text
<i>"Providence"</i>	Natasha Trethewey	Student text
<i>Oral history from Hurricane Katrina</i>	Barbara Terance from "We Watched Everything Wash Away" Part 2: Hurricane Katrina	Student text
<i>Oral history from Hurricane Katrina</i>	Mike Miller/NPR	Student text
<i>Oral history from Hurricane Katrina</i>	Elizabeth/"This I Believe"	Student text
<i>Oral history from Hurricane Katrina</i>	Debra Dennis from the Hurricane Digital Memory Bank	Student text
<i>Katrina Through the Eyes of Children: Art/Photo Gallery</i>	Various	Read aloud
<i>Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide</i>	GOHSEP	Group text

Ideas for discussing hurricanes and first-person narratives

- What is a hurricane?
- How does the environment play a role in natural disaster?
- Why is does a state like Louisiana have so many hurricanes?
- Have you ever experienced a hurricane or other natural disaster (snow storm, tornado, wildfires, earthquake etc.) ?
- What impact did the hurricane or natural disaster have on your daily life?
- What impact does a story have when the person who experienced something is telling it versus someone reporting on something that happened?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
<i>I Survived the Joplin Tornado 2011</i>	Lauren Tarshis

<i>The Science of a Hurricane</i>	Mary Reina
<i>Total Devastation: The Story of Hurricane Katrina</i>	Michael Burgan
<i>Zane and the Hurricane</i>	W.R. Philbrick
<i>Earthquake in Haiti</i>	Miriam Aronin
<i>Detecting Hurricanes</i>	Samantha Bell
<i>Hurricane Katrina</i>	Peggy Caravantes

What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading (weekends and school breaks too!). Before bedtime is a great time to read.
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss your child's reading. Ask questions like:
 - What was that book about?
 - What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - What did you learn?
 - What questions do you have about what you read?
 - What didn't you understand about what you read?
 - What do you want to learn more about after reading the book?
 - How does this book connect to other books you've read?