

EPISODE 63
LEVEL A1.2/A2.1

READING COMPREHENSION



DISASTERS

Do you remember what happened in Thailand a few years ago? A **tsunami** (= a very big sea wave), caused by an **earthquake** (= sudden movement of the Earth), destroyed part of the country. I am really happy that in Poland we don't have tsunamis or **tornadoes** (= strong winds which move in a circle), but **gales** (= very strong winds) happen quite often and we have many other problems of our own. In summer there are **floods** (= when there is too much water in rivers) or **droughts** (= no rain for a long time) - not as serious as in Africa, of course, where they cause **famine** (= no food). In winter, on the other hand, in the mountains we have **avalanches** (= a lot of snow falling down the mountain), which can be really dangerous for skiers. Still, this country is not the most dangerous in the world.



More contexts for the new words:

- A **hurricane** hit Florida yesterday. (= a strong storm which moves in a circle)
- The winter brought many **blizzards** (= snow storms).



EXERCISE 1

Write the words next to their definitions.

1. = a lot of snow falling down the mountain
2. = no food
3. = no rain for a long time
4. = too much water in rivers
5. = a very strong wind
6. = a very strong wind moving in a circle
7. = sudden movement of the Earth
8. = a very big sea wave



EXERCISE 2

Match the question halves, then answer the questions.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Which of the disasters | a. of natural disasters? |
| 2. Which of the disasters have you seen | b. with your own eyes? When? |
| 3. What can we do to help the victims | c. are the most serious? Why? |

ENGLISH IN USE



As you have surely noticed, we don't use 'the' in front of "Thailand" or "Africa." Although this is a rule for almost every name of a country, there are some exceptions here too.

We say: Poland, France, Germany
but: **the** USA, **the** UK, **the** Czech Republic.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



A/ Is everything ready for the party?
B/ I guess so. Let's relax for a moment in **THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM**.

The calm before the storm is a quiet time just before problems start.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



1. When you **STORM OUT**, you go somewhere very quickly because you are angry or upset.

John **stormed out** of the house and slammed the door.
She **stormed out** of the classroom, mad at the teacher.

2. If people are **FLOODED OUT**, their home becomes filled with water and they are forced to leave. This phrasal verb is usually used in the passive.

Hundreds of Poles were **flooded out** last summer.
We have taken out house insurance, in case we are **flooded out**.



EXERCISE 3

Match the conversation halves.

1. The children are so quiet. I think it's good.
2. Why was their house destroyed?
3. What did Judy do after her boyfriend broke up with her?
 - a. They were flooded out.
 - b. I don't agree. It's the calm before the storm.
 - c. She stormed out of the house and ran away.

NEWS



HURRICANE KATRINA

Hurricane Katrina crossed southern Florida last night, hitting the US for the first time since the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season. The hurricane, widely known as one of the five deadliest natural disasters ever befalling America, is **wreaking havoc** again. Its 2005 **toll** was estimated at over 80 billion dollars in property damage, and almost two thousand people killed in the hurricane itself and in the **subsequent** floods. What will it be this time?

Regardless of its disastrous consequences, Hurricane Katrina raises questions of political correctness: why are the most dangerous hurricanes given almost exclusively female names? Feminists and linguists have launched a campaign targeted at this **prejudice**, resulting now in more and more male names being ascribed to natural disasters.

GLOSSARY

- **to wreak havoc** – to do very serious damage
- **toll** – damage
- **subsequent** – later
- **prejudice** – unfair bias

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. an avalanche
2. famine
3. a drought
4. a flood
5. a gale
6. a tornado
7. an earthquake
8. a tsunami

Ex.2

1. c
2. b
3. a

Ex.3

1. b
2. a
3. c