

**WORLD SCOUT ENVIRONMENT BADGE**  
PROGRAMME ACTIVITY RESOURCE



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## A Natural Disaster Story

### Aim 5

Scouts are working towards a world where people are prepared to respond to environmental hazards and natural disasters.

### Educational objectives

Be able to recognise different types of environmental hazards and natural disasters and explain why they occur.

Demonstrate how to help other people to be prepared to respond to environmental hazards and natural disasters in the local area.

Explain how changes to the environment can influence environmental hazards and natural disasters.

### Age range

15+

### Summary

A fun, drama based activity that explores how to cope when faced with a natural disaster.

### Aim

To gain an awareness of the importance of preparation and decision making in a natural disaster situation.

### Equipment

Scenarios, paper and pens, WOSM movie 'Natural Disasters: Will You Be Prepared?' (optional)

### Preparation

Print off the disaster scenarios from the resources section, or amend as appropriate for your group

## Duration

Sixty minutes

## Setting

Scout meeting place

## Background

Natural disasters occur all around the world and can have a devastating effect on the natural environment and on human beings. There are lots of different types of natural disaster, for example, hurricane, tropical cyclone, typhoon, tornado, drought, flood, volcano, landslide, tsunami, heat wave, wildfire, insect plague, famine, health epidemic, avalanche and earthquake.

It is very important that we have an understanding of natural disasters. The effect of a natural disaster can sometimes be minimised with careful preparation, awareness of warning signs (if appropriate) and knowledge of what to do once the disaster occurs. We need to be prepared to respond to them when they happen to us and to be able to provide support when they happen to others.

## Step by step guide to activity

1. Introduce the subject of natural disasters. Ask the Scouts to name different types of natural disaster and write their answers on a large sheet of paper.
2. A short movie is available from the World Scouting website ([www.scout.org](http://www.scout.org)) to introduce how various natural disasters affect Scouts around the world, or have information from recent natural disasters to share with the Scouts.
3. Split the Scouts into groups and give each group a natural disaster scenario card. Use the examples provided or write your own using natural disaster types that are more applicable for your Scouts. Ensure that the examples used show the different timescales that are associated with natural disasters. The card asks the group to prepare a short play about the situation described on their card. You can provide costumes and props if appropriate. Allow approximately twenty minutes for preparation and rehearsal.
4. Ask each group to present their play to the rest of the group.

## Evaluation

1. Gather the group together to discuss the activity. Use the following questions to help the discussion.

What were the main differences in the natural disaster scenarios?

How did the preparation for each disaster vary?

Could all the disasters be prepared for?

How important was the decision making in each scenario?

How pressured was the decision making in each scenario?

Do they think this is how it might happen in reality?

2. Note to Leaders: Natural disasters can be devastating experiences and impact on the environment, infrastructure and people long after the initial event. It is important to provide ongoing support for young people to assist their recovery following a natural disaster.

## Further activities

1. Make an emergency response kit with the Scouts. See 'Prepare for Disaster!' activity for example.
2. Having a knowledge of first aid is very important when placed in an emergency situation. Organise a first aid course for the Scouts.
3. Visit an emergency response facility in your local area, for example, the Fire Brigade or the Police Station. How do they cope with emergency situations? Have they ever responded to a natural disaster?

## Example Disaster Scenarios

### Scenario 1 Long Term Drought

#### Instructions

Read through the following story about how a long term drought affects a family.

The story is not complete. At each gap in the story there is a question to help your group think about how to decide what happens next.

Make the story into a short play to show the rest of the group.

#### The story

Your family live very happily on a farm in the countryside near a small town. You have cattle, a vegetable garden and some fields growing crops. Your water supply comes from the local reservoir and your own rainwater tanks.

Your father regularly keeps up to date with information about weather, livestock markets and the agricultural industry through the internet and newspapers.

One evening, he asks the whole family to remain at the table after dinner. "I am afraid I have some bad news," he says. The weather reports on the television are warning that we will be facing a drought this year. This could be very bad news for our crops and our cattle. We will have to start thinking about how we will cope."

#### Question

What strategies are your family going to put in place to live through this drought?

It is now five months into the drought. Only 40% of your usual rainfall has come, and the crops haven't grown so your animals have little food. You have two options. Firstly, purchase some food for them. This solution is not ideal as there is very little available due to the drought and it is very expensive. The second option is to sell some of your cattle. However, everyone else is trying to sell their animals too, and the prices your family would receive are very low.

The climate predictions say this drought will last for another year. Your Mum's garden is still beautiful, but your Dad does not seem very happy these days.

#### Question

What do you and your family do?

### Scenario 2 Hurricane Approaching

#### Instructions

Read through the following story about how a hurricane affects a family.

The story is not complete. At each gap in the story there is a question to help your group think about how to decide what happens next.

Make the story into a short play to show the rest of the group.

#### The story

Your family live in a house on a hill overlooking the ocean, near the equator. You have your own power supply from a wind generator and solar panels. You live in an area that receives hurricanes and when the hurricane season is upon you, you know to be prepared. Your family has an emergency kit ready permanently and you keep an eye on the weather forecasts.

For the last few days, your family has been watching reports on the evening news of a low pressure system that has deepened considerably, turned into a tropical cyclone and is travelling across the ocean heading your way! The latest prediction is that it will hit the coast tomorrow morning. Everyone is warned to be on high alert and prepare for hurricane damage immediately. The hurricane is expected to bring severe wind for around 12 hours.

#### Question

What do you and your family do to prepare for the hurricane?

Its 6.30 am on the day of the predicted hurricane. The winds are starting to pick up and rain is falling heavily. There are new warnings of a major storm surge/ Ocean levels could rise as much as 5 meters due to the upward sucking of the cyclone system.

#### Question

Does this change any of the plans your family made?

It is now 7.30 pm. The winds were terribly strong this morning and coming from the east- pieces of buildings and tree branches was flying everywhere, trees were being flattened and the rain kept coming down. Just after lunch, the eye of the storm crossed over you - it was strangely calm and the sun was shining. Then Bam!! The winds came howling again, this time from the west, and more rain fell. More flying materials, and the storm surge came in. Everything within 1 km of the coast flooded - there were fish in the streets. Now the

winds are dying down, but the rain is still falling.

Question  
What damage did your home suffer?

It is one week later and the hurricane has totally gone but the damage to your neighbourhood and the environment hasn't.

Question  
How did you help after the hurricane?

### **Scenario 3**

## **Earthquake**

### **Instructions**

Read through the following story about how an earthquake affects a family.

The story is not complete. At each gap in the story there is a question to help your group think about how to decide what happens next.

Make the story into a short play to show the rest of the group.

### **The story**

It is a normal weekend morning and your family are enjoying breakfast in your apartment. You live in a big city on a Pacific Island. Your pet cat all of a sudden appears really agitated and then suddenly a loud rumbling sound is heard and everything starts shaking violently. The TV goes off, things are falling off shelves, a light fitting crashes from the ceiling and your Mum screams "earthquake!"

Question  
What does the family do?

The shaking comes to a stop. Your home is a mess, your mum has burnt her arm when the hot water from the stove hit her skin, and you're all scared, but otherwise you're all okay, including the cat. However, you know that there could be aftershocks.

Question  
What do you do now?

After a few minutes the power goes out suddenly and you are all left in the dark. You can smell gas coming from the kitchen.

Question  
What can you do about the gas, and being in the dark?

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