

Zoo Story

What happens when a fierce hurricane nearly destroys a zoo?

Comprehension

Genre

A **Nonfiction Article** in a newspaper or magazine presents facts and information.

Generate Questions

Make Generalizations

A generalization is a way of describing a subject or situation in broad statements, without giving a lot of details or specifics.



Hurricane Andrew was a **devastating** natural disaster for South Florida. In terms of property damage, it is one of the worst **calamities** ever to hit the United States. When Andrew swept ashore with wind gusts of 175 miles per hour, thousands of people lost their homes. The storm also nearly destroyed Miami's Metrozoo, home to thousands of wild animals. Setting their own losses aside, 100 dedicated men and women worked frantically to take care of the needs of the dazed and helpless animals roaming through the wreckage of the zoo. For some creatures whose habitats were destroyed, survival was a race against time.



SAVING THE KOALAS

The zoo's three koalas lost their only source of food—a eucalyptus grove—and the roof of their air-conditioned enclosure. They were suffering in dangerously high heat and humidity.



Metrozoo worker Ron McGill surveys the damage to the zoo by Hurricane Andrew.

“It was very important to get them to another facility immediately,” said Ron McGill, a zoo employee. “We called Busch Gardens in Tampa, the closest zoo that has koalas, but we had the problem of getting them there fast.”

After he made a radio appeal, a private pilot came to the rescue. He got permission from the National Guard to have a runway cleared of debris at Tamiami Airport. Then he loaded the koalas into his small plane and was able to **evacuate** them to a temporary and safe new home. “You shouldn’t have to wait for a natural catastrophe for these things to happen,” said McGill. “But it shows that a lot of good will come of this.”

A COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER

After Andrew hit, the area had to deal with looting, food and water shortages, and the misery of 250,000 people left homeless. The hasty cleanup of Metrozoo emerged as one of the brightest examples of public generosity in the face of a disaster. With its soaring aviary and sleek monorail, Metrozoo had been a source of civic pride for Miamians.

Zoo staff took steps in advance to try to **mitigate** damage the hurricane might cause. These efforts included drastically trimming trees to reduce the number of broken limbs. They sheltered all flamingos, storks, and cranes in the



Ron McGill tries to recapture some of the exotic birds that escaped during the storm.

zoo's concrete restrooms. Despite these measures, Andrew would not be denied. Exhibit roofs peeled off while uprooted trees and trailers tore through the air like missiles. They demolished chain-link fences and freed an antelope herd, a gibbon, a tapir, hundreds of birds, and several 500-pound Galapagos tortoises. "We had to get a forklift to put the tortoises back," said McGill.

Another casualty was the zoo's spectacular aviary, containing 320 birds of 80 different species. The 60-foot-high netting roof collapsed, crushing many of the birds and leaving others at the mercy of 150-mph winds. Fortunately, the rhino and giraffes were uninjured and stayed in their torn enclosures. They probably "felt more secure in a familiar place," explains McGill. The animals that might have

posed a threat to humans—lions, tigers, bears, and gorillas—rode out Andrew's high winds behind the steel grates and poured concrete of their night houses. The zoo's fatality list was miraculously short: three antelope, an ostrich that was hit by flying debris, a small gibbon, and many birds.

"When I first got here," said McGill, "I sat down and cried. I wondered if we would ever be able to rebuild."

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR HELP

Reacting to calls for help, other zoos started sending specialized foods for the animals. Veterinarians offered to **administer** care, and many people donated chain saws to cut fallen trees.



McGill checks to see if this elephant has been injured.

Zoos also delivered meat for the big cats and fish for the birds. An hour after McGill appealed on TV for refrigeration help, a man lent the zoo two large refrigerated trucks. “We’ve gotten such an overwhelming response to our requests,” McGill said. “I don’t know if I got more emotional over the tragedy of the loss or over the outpouring of support.” Still, he said, “while we all love animals, we need to take care of people first. I don’t want anyone to bring us water if it takes away from a family that needs it.”

McGill was hopeful about the animals’ future. He told the story of the workers who came across a tiny miracle in the wreckage. There lay a baby yellow-backed duiker (DIGH•kur), a small, now motherless antelope born during the storm and still alive. They promptly dubbed it Andrew. “In the midst of the destruction, here was this new life,” said McGill. “It was like a ray of hope. And we knew as long as we didn’t lose hope, we’d be okay.”

Think and Compare



1. What generalization can you make about the people in the article?
2. Give three examples of how community members were able to help save the zoo.
3. If you had to evacuate because of an oncoming hurricane, what would you take with you, and why?
4. “Be Prepared When Disaster Strikes” on page 180 offers steps to take in emergencies. What steps did the staff at Miami’s Metrozoo take to protect the animals?



Test Strategy

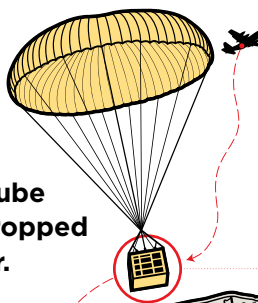
Author and Me

The answer is not directly stated. You have to think about what you know and link it to the text.

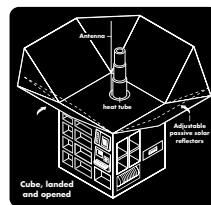
A CARE PACKAGE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

For its 2004 design competition, *Popular Science* magazine used the theme of a twenty-first century care package. Entrants were asked to consider this question: How could emerging technology help a community in need? They were to identify a community, define a need, and imagine a way that technology could fix it.

Alexander Rose and Danny Hillis took the grand prize with their “Care Cube.” The pair thought that infrastructure was the key to a community’s recovery after a disaster. They identified clean water, communications, and power as the most fundamental needs to be restored first. Therefore, their idea featured a six-foot-square box, weighing about a ton, stocked with these basics:



The Care Cube could be dropped from the air.



- ✓ Solar-powered cell phone/personal digital assistants that automatically signal other units until users’ messages are picked up or make it to the Internet.
- ✓ LCD screens and software-driven keyboards that shift easily between alphabets of different languages.
- ✓ Retractable sinks and water purification filters.
- ✓ An engine fueled by solar reflectors or a combustion box that would store energy. (The box would also contain a stationary bicycle as an alternative way to generate electricity should the engine fail.)

For a community devastated by a crisis, the “Care Cube” could literally be a lifesaver!

Directions: Answer the questions.

1. The BEST meaning for infrastructure is

- A construction materials.
- B basic services and resources.
- C power source.
- D interior design.

2. What goal did *Popular Science* most likely want to achieve with this contest?

- A to find ways technology can help communities in an emergency
- B to select new technologies that should become profitable
- C to showcase America's technological expertise
- D to increase interest in water treatment systems

3. What generalization can be made about the grand prize winner of the contest?

- A The Care Cube efficiently answers the needs of a community in crisis.
- B The Care Cube allows people to learn different languages.
- C The Care Cube could save lives by purifying contaminated water.
- D The Care Cube is a flawed concept because it does not provide a source of food.

4. What three options does the Care Cube offer for generating power? Which one seems most practical, and why?

5. Explain how a community could use the Care Cube after suffering a natural disaster. Be sure to include details and examples to support your ideas.

Tip

You have to think about the entire passage to choose the best answer.

Write to a Prompt

You just read about one idea for helping people in need. People help each other in many ways. Write a story about a time when you helped someone in need. Include details about what happened, what you did to help, and how you felt.

Finding a Way to Help

I won't ever say I'm starving again. Two weeks ago, our class read about hunger in the world. I learned that millions of people really are starving.

That night after dinner, I looked at the plates. We were actually throwing out food! Right then, I decided to do something. First, I talked to community leaders about how to help people in need. The best thing to do, they agreed, was raise money to buy food.

I talked with my friends and we went to Ms. Rogers, our teacher. She agreed to let us organize a Bike for Hunger day. Next, we signed up sponsors. They agreed to donate so much for each mile we rode. The local paper even did a story about our project.

Yesterday, we had our ride. We rode 30 miles in all—the most I've ever done! I was so tired, I could hardly stand. Then my dad said, "You raised over a thousand dollars today." I could have jumped over the moon!

Next year, we will do it again.



I wrote my story in chronological order and finished with a strong ending.

Writing Prompt

Cell phones are one form of technology that has helped people in many ways. Think of an emergency when you used a cell phone or other form of technology to help solve a problem or to get someone out of a dangerous situation. Write a one-page story about what happened, and put events in a logical order.

Writer's Checklist

- Ask yourself, who is my audience?
- Think about your purpose for writing.
- Plan your writing before beginning.
- Use details to support your story.
- Be sure your story has a beginning, a middle, and an ending.
- Use your best spelling, grammar, and punctuation.