

# ***EXTREME WEATHER***



## Talk About It

What is the most extreme weather experience you have had? What happened and what did you learn from it?



Find out more about extreme weather at [www.macmillanmh.com](http://www.macmillanmh.com)

## Vocabulary

damages            atmosphere  
property            destruction  
available            hurricanes  
contact              surge



## Dictionary

### Multiple-Meaning Words

are words with several different meanings. If one meaning doesn't fit the sentence, look for its other definition. For example, the word *atmosphere* is a multiple-meaning word.

# THE EXTREME COSTS OF EXTREME WEATHER

*by Eliana Rodriguez*

**E**very now and then, nature provides examples of extreme weather. At these times the temperature, wind, water, and air pressure sometimes go wild. The result can be billions of dollars in **damages** to **property**. People's homes and belongings can be destroyed and people are sometimes hurt.

One government agency tracks the cost of extreme weather. Every year it lists each weather event that costs the United States a billion dollars or more. These facts can be obtained readily and are **available** to the public.

From May 1999 to May 2000 many incidents of extreme weather occurred. In May 1999, tornadoes ripped through Oklahoma and Kansas. A tornado is a violently spinning column of air. First, warm air makes **contact** with cool air in the **atmosphere** or surrounding air. Next, the warmer and cooler air stir together, spinning faster and faster. Finally, a tornado is born. The May 1999 tornadoes cut a 1.7 billion dollar path of ruin and **destruction**, killing 55 people.

**Hurricanes** are storms with heavy rain and strong winds, over 75 miles-per-hour, that grow stronger over warm oceans. In September 1999 a hurricane called Floyd hit North Carolina. When Hurricane Floyd hit land, its heavy rains lasted for two days. This rain caused a **surge** of water that rushed powerfully along North Carolina’s coast. Twelve other states also had flooding. Floyd’s price tag was 6.5 billion dollars and 77 people died.

By May of 2000, high temperatures and a drought in the western United States caused raging fires. Nearly 7 million acres burned and losses were more than 2 billion dollars.

Nature sometimes uses snow and ice to create extreme weather conditions. For example, blizzards are costly winter problems. A blizzard occurs when winds blow



at 35 miles-per-hour, the temperature is 20°F or lower, and snow falls. One blizzard called the “Storm of the Century,” howled along the east coast of the United States in March 1993. It cost more than 7 billion dollars and caused 270 deaths. Now that’s extreme!

## Reread for Comprehension



### Text Structure Description

Description is one way authors organize, or structure nonfiction text. A Description Chart will help you understand this text structure. Signal words like *first*, *next*, *finally*, or *for example* will alert you to descriptive facts. Use the Description Chart as you reread this selection.

Signal Words	Descriptive Facts