

# Facts about Hurricanes!

Hurricanes are huge tropical storms which form far out at sea. Sometimes they reach land, where they can do lots of damage. Hurricanes are very common in some parts of the world, but fortunately they don't often affect the UK. This text is full of interesting facts about hurricanes.

Hold on tight, gang — and we mean super tight! — because we're about to check out ten facts on one of nature's most powerful forces — hurricanes!

- Hurricanes are giant tropical storms that produce heavy rainfall and *super*-strong winds.
- 5 • Hurricanes form over warm ocean waters near the equator. The warm, moist air above the ocean surface rises, causing air from surrounding areas to be 'sucked' in. This 'new' air then becomes warm and moist, and rises, too, beginning a continuous cycle that forms clouds. The clouds then rotate with the spin of the Earth. If there is enough warm water to feed the storm, a hurricane forms!
- 10 • Hurricanes rotate around a circular centre called the 'eye', where it is generally calm with no clouds. Surrounding the eye is the eye wall — the most dangerous part of the hurricane with the strongest winds, thickest clouds and heaviest rain!
- Most hurricanes occur harmlessly out at sea. However, when they move towards land they can be incredibly dangerous and cause serious damage.
- 15 • The strong spiralling winds of a hurricane can reach speeds of up to 320 kmph — strong enough to rip up entire trees and destroy buildings!
- In the southern hemisphere, hurricanes rotate in a clockwise direction, and in the northern hemisphere they rotate in an anticlockwise direction. This is due to what's called the Coriolis Force, produced by the Earth's rotation.
- 20 • When a hurricane reaches land it often produces a 'storm surge'. This is when the high winds drive the sea toward the shore, causing water levels to rise and creating large crashing waves. Storm surges can reach 6 m high and extend to over 150 km!
- Hurricanes are also called cyclones and typhoons, depending on where they occur. In the Atlantic Ocean and northeast Pacific they are hurricanes, in the northwest Pacific they are typhoons and in the South Pacific and Indian Ocean they are cyclones.
- 25 • The largest hurricane on record is Typhoon Tip, which occurred in 1979 in the northwest Pacific. With a diameter of around 2,220 km, it was nearly half the size of the United States!
- 30 • Hurricanes are given names by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) so that they can be distinguished. Each year, tropical storms are named in alphabetical order according to a list produced by the WMO. That name stays with the storm if it develops into a hurricane. The names can only be repeated after six years.

1

Why is the word "super" written in italics in line 3?

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☐

1 mark

2

Why don't hurricanes form over cold oceans?

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☐

1 mark

3

Who do you think this text is aimed at? How can you tell?

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☐

2 marks

4

Why do you think the author uses a lot of exclamation marks in this text?

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☐

1 mark

5

The author compares the size of Typhoon Tip to the size of the United States (lines 26-27). Why do you think they did this?

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☐

2 marks

6

The purpose of this text is (circle one):

a. to persuade and inform    b. to inform and entertain    c. to entertain and persuade

☐

1 mark

7

Why do you think hurricanes are more dangerous on land than they are out at sea?

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☐

2 marks

Total  
out of 10

