After the Shaking

Disaster planning in eighteenth-century Lisbon

WG.5.2 "Analyze the possible effect of a natural disaster on the local community and devise plans to prepare for and respond to a disaster so as to minimize or mitigate its effects."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two immediate dangers, circle two later effects on the community, and number three actions that could reduce harm; use your marks to connect dangers with useful actions.

Lisbon's Disaster and Its Aftermath

1. On November 1, 1755, a powerful earthquake struck Lisbon, Portugal, while many residents were at church for All Saints' Day. Buildings collapsed, and fires spread through crowded streets. A tsunami then flooded low-lying areas along the Tagus River. People who escaped falling stone sometimes ran toward the open waterfront, where the water became another danger. Lisbon was the capital of a kingdom with overseas colonies, so the damaged port mattered far beyond the city. Yet for families in waterfront neighborhoods, the immediate problems were shelter, safe routes, and finding missing relatives.

2. Disaster effects did not end when the shaking stopped. Broken streets and fallen walls slowed carts carrying food and water. Fire destroyed stored goods and made some buildings unsafe to enter. With homes gone, families needed places to sleep away from damaged structures and the flooded shore. Traders also faced delays because damaged warehouses and docks could not handle cargo as usual. Those delays could reduce wages for people who loaded ships or sold supplies. A plan for Lisbon had to protect lives first, then restore basic services and work without sending people back into dangerous areas.

3. Portugal's government, led by the Marquis of Pombal, organized relief and rebuilding after the disaster. Officials used soldiers to remove debris and maintain order, and temporary shelters housed survivors. As Lisbon was rebuilt, planners laid out wider streets and used new building methods intended to better withstand earthquakes. Before another shock, residents could choose meeting places on higher ground and keep water and basic supplies ready. After a shock, local leaders could send people away from damaged walls and the river's edge, check who is missing, and direct workers to clear routes for food. Each choice answers a different danger.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. People fleeing collapsed buildings sometimes ran toward the waterfront. Where would you direct them instead, and what danger would that avoid?

2. Why should workers clear routes for food before trying to restore cargo trade at the port?

3. Where should temporary shelters be placed, and how would that choice reduce harm to families whose homes were lost?

4. How could wider streets and stronger buildings reduce different effects of a future earthquake?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In 1820, spring floods threaten a river trading town. Homes and a food warehouse stand near the bank, and a footbridge connects the town to farms. Write four or five sentences explaining two likely effects, one preparation the town could make before flooding, and two actions it could take afterward to reduce harm.

ANSWER KEY

After the Shaking

HIGH SCHOOL · WG.5.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two immediate dangers, circle two later effects on the community, and number three actions that could reduce harm; use your marks to connect dangers with useful actions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	People fleeing collapsed buildings sometimes ran toward the waterfront. Where would you direct them instead, and what danger would that avoid?	**Direct them to a meeting place on higher ground to avoid flooding from a tsunami.**
2	Why should workers clear routes for food before trying to restore cargo trade at the port?	**Blocked streets slowed food and water deliveries, so clearing routes would meet urgent needs before workers turned to delayed trade.**
3	Where should temporary shelters be placed, and how would that choice reduce harm to families whose homes were lost?	**Place shelters away from damaged structures and the flooded shore so families have a place to sleep without facing falling walls or floodwater.**
4	How could wider streets and stronger buildings reduce different effects of a future earthquake?	**Wider streets could give people and supply carts clearer routes and limit fire spreading through crowded streets. Stronger buildings could reduce collapse.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Floodwater could damage homes near the bank and force families to leave. It could also ruin food in the warehouse or wash out the footbridge, making supplies harder to reach. Before the flood, residents could move stored food to higher ground and agree on a safe meeting place. Afterward, local leaders could shelter displaced families uphill and arrange boat deliveries while the footbridge is unsafe.

Accept other historically plausible plans when students explain how each action reduces a specific risk in the passage or the 1820 scenario. Responses should put immediate safety and basic needs ahead of restoring trade.