**Not Scared ... Prepared**

*By Valerie Havas*

1 Sometimes news headlines are scary. Hearing about tornadoes, bird flu, war, and events such as Hurricane Katrina can make you feel worried. But there are reasons to relax. Now more than ever, many people—from individuals to government officials—are working to prepare for and respond to disasters.

2 First responders are ready for emergencies. And some schools regularly stage fire and severe-weather drills. Students at Pine View Middle School in Land O' Lakes, Fla., for example, sometimes practice evacuating buildings, just as they would during a tornado. The school's principal, David Estabrook, is a shelter manager. He received special training. "It's a whole lot of people working together—the Red Cross, the sheriff's office, and the school," he says.

3 States also prepare for emergencies. In Alaska, more than 40 volcanoes have erupted since the 1700s. So the state's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management provides Alaskans with tips on dealing with volcanic ash. Officials in California try to prevent large floods, which could occur if leveesin the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region break because of an earthquake or a big storm. A few years ago, California’s former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in that area because of damage from big rainstorms.

4 Governments are also preparing for possible health-related disasters, such as an outbreak of the bird flu. The disease has infected and killed some people in other parts of the world. North American agencies are testing migratory birds and creating response plans in the event that it spreads to this part of the world. A Web site operated by the Department of Health and Human Services offers planning checklists for state and local governments, schools, businesses, healthcare services, and individuals.

5 Many government groups prepare for possible disasters and respond to them.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was created to help people both before and after disasters. FEMA does everything from helping make sure that buildings are designed to withstand damage to training emergency workers. When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, many people criticized FEMA for not responding as well as it could have. There has even been talk of shutting FEMA down and creating a new agency.

6 Other federal disaster responders include the National Guard and the U.S. Coast Guard. The National Guard is a group that can quickly be activated in the event of a national emergency, such as a hurricane, floods, or a war. The Coast Guard is the nation's oldest agency for protecting U.S. waters. It carries out search-and-rescue missions during and after disasters.

7 Many organizations outside the government help out too. For instance, the American Red Cross responds to more than 70,000 disasters each year, offering food, shelter, and other essential aid. The organization also provides almost half the nation's blood supply. In addition, the Red Cross offers lifesaving courses in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). CPR helps restore normal breathing in a person who is unable to breathe. The Red Cross is currently working on creating a better disaster response system. One of the organization's goals is to work with more community groups.

8 Habitat for Humanity gives volunteer laborers the training and supervision they need to help disaster victims rebuild their homes. Organizations such as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Humane Society, and Noah's Wish train volunteers to rescue animals in times of disaster.

9 Of course, you can't prepare for every kind of disaster, and there's no need to try. After all, there's no reason to fear a tsunami if you live in Kansas or to lose sleep over earthquakes if you don't live near a fault zone. Not every health scare or news story is cause for alarm to you and the people you love. For specific issues that might affect you, though, it's good to know that people are ready, just in case.

**Part A**

Read the sentence from paragraph 5 in the “Not Scared… Prepared.”

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, many people criticized FEMA for not responding as well as it could have.

What does the word **criticized** mean in the sentence?

1. To disapprove of
2. To approve of
3. To honor something
4. To admire someone or something

**Part B**

Which statement from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

1. “Many government groups prepare for possible disasters and respond to them.”
2. “The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was created to help people both before and after disasters.”
3. “FEMA does everything from helping make sure that buildings are designed to withstand damage to training emergency workers.”
4. “There has even been talk of shutting FEMA down and creating a new agency.”

**Part A**

What is the main idea in the passage “Not Scared…Prepared”?

1. People need to make sure that there are agencies in their surroundings that will provide for them in time of disaster.
2. All states should have organizations created to assist the civilians in time of emergency.
3. There are many different people and organizations that can assist people in times of emergency like a natural disaster.
4. Habitat for Humanity provides shelter for those in need.

**Part B**

Which sentences from the passage **best** support the answer to Part A? Select **all** that apply.

1. “Now more than ever, many people—from individuals to government officials—are working to prepare for and respond to disasters.”
2. “First responders are ready for emergencies.”
3. “Students at Pine View Middle School in Land O' Lakes, Fla., for example, sometimes practice evacuating buildings, just as they would during a tornado.”
4. “The National Guard is a group that can quickly be activated in the event of a national emergency, such as a hurricane, floods, or a war.”
5. “Organizations such as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Humane Society, and Noah's Wish train volunteers to rescue animals in times of disaster.”
6. “Not every health scare or news story is cause for alarm to you and the people you love.”

**Part A**

Why does the author **most likely** place the information in paragraph 1 at the beginning of “Not Scared…Prepared”?

1. to encourage the reader to learn about hazards and why they do not need to worry about as much about them
2. to show the reader how different organizations have come together to help people during dealing with hazards
3. to draw the reader in by explaining the different types of hazards
4. to teach the reader about the different organizations

**Part B**

Which detail from “Not Scared…Prepared” **best** supports the answer to Part A?

1. “Sometimes news headlines are scary.”
2. “Hearing about tornadoes, bird flu, war, and events such as Hurricane Katrina can make you feel worried.”
3. “But there are reasons to relax.”
4. “Now more than ever, many people—from individuals to government officials—are working to prepare for and respond to disasters.”