

Hurricane Katrina and the New Orleans Disaster
Micheal Esposito & Sheila Tobin Cavooris
6th Grade Social Studies
September-November 2011
Argument Essay

(This assignment was designed to address the 2011-12 N.Y. State Core Curriculum Standards, preparing students with college and career literacy skills)

You have been preparing your research skills using the GHMS Library Database System and other reference material in order to explore the details surrounding Hurricane Katrina and the New Orleans disaster. This project will address the essential question, “How does geography/location impact the development of a civilization?” Now you will write an argument essay addressing the *theme question* “Was the New Orleans devastation that occurred after Hurricane Katrina due to a natural disaster or a man-made disaster?” The two arguments include: “Was it a natural disaster caused by nature? Was it a man-made disaster caused by errors or mistakes made by man?” You will present 3-4 reasons for each argument and then you will draw your own conclusion from the evidence you presented. (Your notes will be attached and will count for a percentage of the grade.)

Here are the required directions for the four paragraphs:

First Paragraph: Clearly state the “*thematic question*” for this task. Then describe the background to explain the disaster that occurred in New Orleans, including:

What was the name of the hurricane that hit New Orleans?

When did it occur? (Give background/setting)

What did some people in New Orleans do to escape the storm and what happened to those left behind?

How badly did the hurricane affect the city?

How much damage/what kind of damage was done to the city?

You may include any other information to help the reader understand the storm and the impact on New Orleans, Louisiana.

Second Paragraph: Analyze 3-4 reasons why the storm was a “natural disaster.” You must state each reason clearly and then provide sufficient support and evidence to show your understanding of how this contributed to a “natural disaster.” This must have rich detail and factual information from your notes and research.

Third Paragraph: Analyze 3-4 reasons why the storm was a “man-made disaster.” You must state each reason clearly and then provide sufficient support and evidence to show your understanding of how this contributed to a “man-made disaster”. This must have rich detail and factual information from your notes and research.

Fourth Paragraph: After carefully considering all the information gathered from your research and from your participation in the Katrina argument, please state your conclusion, “was it a natural disaster or man-made disaster?” You must again provide text evidence to show your conclusion. The text evidence should be used to draw inferences, to synthesize ideas, and to clearly state your conclusion.

We will type these essays and they should be about 1-2 pages in length, on average. This does not guarantee an A paper. It is what you say, and not how long it takes you to say it.