



Hurricanes : get prepared !

Maëlle Nauroy

Lycée Paul Langevin, Suresnes, France (maelle.nauroy@ac-versailles.fr)

Living in France, near Paris, we have the chance not to be exposed to natural hazards. But on TV we can see, almost every year, geological disasters affecting people from all around the world. Sometimes it also affects us indirectly. For example, the Icelandic volcanic eruption of 2010 prevented some of my students to go on holidays because of the air travel disruption. Since then, every year, we study a natural disaster that has just made the headlines. This topic is of great interest for students because it is connected with their everyday life, with what they see on the news at that time.

This year, they were amazed that a city as New York could be struck so violently by a hurricane. Understanding the formation of a hurricane and the consequences of such an event made them think about how to educate people and warn them in case of a hurricane. As a matter of fact, history teaches that a lack of hurricane awareness and preparation are common threads among all major hurricane disasters. By knowing the vulnerability and what actions people should take, it is possible to reduce the effects of a hurricane disaster.

They designed posters, showing how a hurricane form, the risks and what to do in case of a hurricane alert. They used TV news broadcasts and educational videos as well as videos from the National Hurricane Center [of the United-States]. Later, they tried to model the formation of a hurricane and the consequences of storm surge, high winds and inland flooding on a coastal area. They filmed their experiments in order to create an interactive exhibition on hurricanes, to be displayed in the school library for other students.