

What is a hurricane? Have you ever seen or experienced one?

Read and translate the media headlines

Hurricane Ian's exceptional death toll, explained

Florida has seen plenty of hurricanes. Why was Ian so deadly?

By Omar Khan | Oct 1, 2022, 11:50am EDT

The Last Hurricane to Hit Florida's East Coast Was Katrina in 2005

Seventeen years ago, Katrina strengthened in the Gulf of Mexico after that first landfall.



30 May 2022 Author: Zenaída González Kotala

As hurricane season kicks off, UCF researchers working to make communities more resilient

Source(s): University of Central Florida

2023 Atlantic hurricane season forecast "slightly below-average"

April 19, 2023

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Nova Scotia

Canadian Hurricane Centre says Hurricane Fiona will be 'historic, extreme event'

Hurricane Ian most costly storm to ever hit Florida after causing \$109bn worth of damage

The tropical storm reached maximum Category 5 status, making it one of the most powerful on record with winds estimated at 161mph (259kph) being recorded.

Tuesday 4 April 2023 14:28, UK

Why do you think hurricanes have human names?

This LWS is built around the episode of Science Diction podcast where Johanna Mayer, the host, tries to find out how hurricanes went from long strings of numbers to plain old Bobs and Sallys.

1. Listen to the clip once _____. Who is Liz Skilton? What is the title of the book she wrote? Apart from hurricanes, what other natural disasters are mentioned in the clip?

Try to unjumble the sentences and to find places for them in the transcript.

1. / and longitude / there was / when we / a period / to ID a storm / used latitude /.

2. / anybody from / nor can / have other implications / you have / history that might /.

3. / hurricanes people / but why / give / do we / names /?

?

4. / larger cultural or / you can't / names that have / political significance / have any / any sort of /.



Listen again and check yourself, also fill the gaps with numbers

So how exactly does the name make it onto this list? Bit of a mystery.

We know there are regional committees that advised the World Meteorological Organization. Beyond that, kind of a black box, but we do know that some names are off limits.

LIZ SKILTON: **A** __ , so you can't have a politician, for instance.

JOHANNA MAYER: Liz Skilton is a historian. She wrote a book called *Tempest – Hurricane Naming in American Culture*, all about how we name hurricanes.

LIZ SKILTON: **B** __ So the analogy I always use is you're never going to see an Adolf Hitler or a Hitler hurricane.

JOHANNA MAYER: And if a hurricane is particularly devastating, you can't reuse that name again, so no more Katrinas, no more Sandys. **C** __ We don't do it for earthquakes, or tornadoes, or blizzards.

And for a long time, it was the same deal with hurricanes. We just called them “the great __ insert location __”, “hurricane of __ insert year __”. **D** __ So you'd have something like hurricane __ degrees, __ minutes, __ seconds North, __ degrees, __ minutes, __ seconds West. Rolls right off the tongue.



2. Listen to the snippet and do the T/F activity

1. At the turn of the 20th century, archeologists uncovered this series of artifacts in Peru. __
2. Some were from broken pieces of pottery. Others are little drawings. __
3. All the artifacts depict a face surrounded by two spiraling arms. __
4. These artifacts were made by the Taino people, who are Indigenous

to the Caribbean islands. __

5. Taino are the first people Marco Polo encountered when he landed. __

6. Taino are also likely the people that gave us the word hurricane. __

7. Cristina Gonzalez isn't Taino herself, and she's getting her doctorate in meteorology right now. __

8. When Columbus and the conquistadors came to the Caribbean, they'd just never seen a hurricane before. __

9. The Maya and several other Indigenous peoples that were living around



the same time as the Taino all had absolutely different words for the same weather phenomenon. ____

3. Listen to the snippet once. _____ What three ingredients make a hurricane? Listen again and answer the questions:



1. When did Western science figure out what was happening in a hurricane?

2. How do hurricanes spin in the northern hemisphere?

3. How warm has to be a sea surface?

4. What drives the intensity of the storm?

5. Why is climate change expected to cause more severe storms?

Read out the chunks listen to the clip again and match the parts of the phrases

warm waters

a tropical storm

a calm eye at the center

miles per hour

named Clement Wragge

rotating storm

the southern

hurricanes for centuries

tropical depression

rotating winds with _____

at least 74 _____

it's technically _____

just a measly old _____

clockwise in _____

suck up heat from _____

a very fast _____

we've been calling these things _____

and then came along a meteorologist _____



Climate change may affect hurricane formations, with longer warm seasons leading to more intense hurricanes. <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-55555555>

4. Listen to the next clip and order the pieces _____

___ And one day, in the mid 1890s for reasons unknown, he started naming storms. It started out innocent enough. He actually used the Greek alphabet for a while, just like we're doing today.

___ So for example, he called one storm Mahina and wrote, quote, "We fear that Mahina will not prove so soft and gentle as the Tahitian maiden of that name."

___ But Clement had a little bit of a mischievous streak. And soon he started zhuzhing things up, dabbled in naming storms after Greek and Roman gods, military heroes, and women, particularly imaginary native women with imaginary personalities.

___ Yeah, definitely kind of cringy. Clement eventually got into some trouble with his naming system. He butted heads with local politicians, and, when he switched from naming storms after Tahitian women and started naming them after politicians, that really pissed them off.

___ In the late 1800s, Clement was the government meteorologist for the state of Queensland in Australia. Over there, they call them cyclones, not hurricanes, but they're the same thing.

___ Clement lost his funding and eventually got run out of weather town. And for a while, his naming system died, too.



Find in the transcript synonyms for:

1) *tended to have fun by playing harmless tricks* – **had a** _____

2) *he began to make things more stylish, lively, or attractive* – **he started** _____

3) *came into conflict, clashed* – _____ **with local politicians**

4) *took part in the activity in a casual or superficial way* – _____ **naming storms**

5) *that absolutely annoyed them* – **that really** _____

5. Read, listen, and ask questions for the “answers” in bold

_____:

LIZ SKILTON: Yeah, the naming system becomes **something of kind of meteorological lore**.

JOHANNA MAYER: Historian Liz Skilton again.

LIZ SKILTON: Like, don't do that because this is going to cause problems, and so it goes away.

JOHANNA MAYER: Four decades went by, and we were back to naming storms the great hurricane of x, y, z year. Then the names came back **because of a novel called Storm**. It was published **in 1941** by an American English professor named George Rippey Stewart, and, while he was doing research for this book, one of the people Stewart came across was **Clement Wragge**. So in the novel, there's this young meteorologist who's tracking **this huge storm**, and he takes a page out of Clement's book and decides to name it.

LIZ SKILTON: And he proclaims that female-only names are really effective ways to remember storms and that it gives them **personalities**.

JOHANNA MAYER: The name that the young meteorologists settles on? Maria. And Storm made a splash. It became a bestseller. Walt Disney made a dramatization of it. It even inspired a song in a 1969 Western Musical.

[AUDIO PLAYBACK]

- (SINGING) The rain is Tess, the fire's Joe, and they call the wind Maria.

[PLAYBACK ENDS]

JOHANNA MAYER: But the thing that really cemented the book's place in history was **World War II** when it made it into these **US government-issued entertainment kits** that were sent **to American soldiers**. So all of these soldiers who were stationed in the Pacific, where there are a lot of typhoons, were reading this book, a book where a meteorologist was giving human names to storms. And pretty soon, the military was **naming storms**, too.

5. Listen and answer the questions _____ :

What "super practical reason" for naming storms did military have?

"It was a pretty pell mell system" – What does it mean?



Whose names would be used as first code-names?

What did the Weather Bureau officially decide in 1953?

Who received an unusual cease and desist letter two decades later?

