Name_____

The Great Quake

Today, in most industrialized countries in the world, buildings are designed to withstand various, unexpected natural disasters. Safety measures are installed in modern-day designs to help contain the spread of fire, and design engineers make sure newer structures are deliberately planned to hold against the violent shifting of the earth during an unexpected earthquake. However, such deliberate design and planning was not the case during the early 1900s.

On April 18, 1906, in the morning hours of the day, the citizens of San Francisco, California, were witnesses to an earthquake so monumental the tremors were felt as far north as Oregon. Neither the city nor its people were prepared for what would happen next: the devastation of their city.

The actual earthquake only lasted two minutes. Of course, the violent tremors must have seemed much longer to the actual eyewitnesses, but the fires that came after the earthquake lasted for nearly three days. The enormous loss from the disaster included the lives of at least five hundred people, and an estimated three thousand acres of the city were destroyed. This disaster is often called simply the "Great Quake" because of the vast destruction that occurred.

Text Questions

1. After reading this passage, what can you predict will most likely happen to San Francisco in the future if another earthquake hits the city?
   a. The city will be less prepared than in 1906.
   b. Fires will ravage the city after an earthquake.
   c. The citizens will refuse to rebuild the city.
   d. The city will be better prepared due to modern-day designs and safety measures.

2. What is the meaning of the word *vast* as used in the last paragraph?
   a. extensive
   b. miniature
   c. simultaneous
   d. perpetual

3. Which would be the best source to learn more about the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906?
   a. a personal website by someone who currently resides in San Francisco
   b. a journal written by someone who survived the 1906 earthquake
   c. an atlas showing the epicenter of the 1906 quake
   d. an online encyclopedia entry about earthquakes

4. Using information from the text, what can you say is true about the 1906 earthquake?
   a. Flooding was a huge problem after the earthquake.
   b. The earthquake left everyone in the city without shelter.
   c. People were ill-prepared for any type of disaster in the 1900s.
   d. The destruction by fires after the earthquake caused major damage to San Francisco.

5. Using information from the passage, explain why the 1906 earthquake became known as the "Great Quake." Write at least two complete sentences.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS