Name_____

Chernobyl: A Nuclear Disaster

In the 1970s, the Chernobyl nuclear plant, located in the Ukraine, was one of the largest nuclear power plants on the planet. In 1986, the facility would experience an explosion that would forever change how much of the world viewed nuclear power. The effects of one fateful day would change the surrounding area forever.

Not until years after the incident would those investigating the cause finally be able to understand the origins of the disaster. An explosion in the reactors created a power surge that eventually led to an explosion that blew the lid off the nuclear reactor. This explosion caused radioactive material to spread to surrounding areas. Many of those areas were inhabited by civilians who were now exposed to dangerous levels of radiation.

Thirty-two people died as an immediate result of the explosion. The radiation that spread out from the facility would contaminate millions of acres. Eventually thousands of people died and thousands of others suffered from radiation poisoning and cancers caused from the nuclear explosion. Those people who lived near Chernobyl but did not die all lost their homes because of the contamination. Chernobyl was officially shut down in 2000, but the disastrous results of the nuclear meltdown remain even today.

Text Questions

1. Which statement is true about the text?
   a. Because of the Chernobyl disaster, nuclear power is no longer used today.
   b. After the meltdown, scientists managed to contain radiation within the area of the nuclear facility.
   c. Inhabitants of the area surrounding Chernobyl were not affected by the nuclear explosion.
   d. Thirty-two people died as an immediate result of the explosion, but many more would die as a result of the nuclear meltdown.

2. Which sentence in the first paragraph best foreshadows the fact that the nuclear meltdown would have long-term effects?
   a. In the 1970s, the Chernobyl nuclear plant, located in the Ukraine, was one of the largest nuclear power plants on the planet.
   b. In 1986, the facility would experience an explosion that would forever change how much of the world viewed nuclear power.
   c. The effects of one fateful day would change the surrounding area forever.
   d. Those people who lived near Chernobyl but did not die all lost their homes because of the contamination.

3. According to the text, which event most likely caused the nuclear meltdown?
   a. a loss of electricity in the facility
   b. a bird flying into some electrical wires outside the plant
   c. an unexpected freeze that caused a sudden drop in temperatures
   d. an explosion in the reactors that caused a power surge

4. After reading this text, what can one conclude about the nuclear plant at Chernobyl?
   a. The plant will reopen within the next decade.
   b. It will continue to provide power from the portions of the plant that were not affected by the explosion.
   c. The people living in the area hope to see the facility providing nuclear power within the near future.
   d. The plant is no longer in operation.

5. Why were people outside of the plant affected by the explosion?
   a. Nuclear radiation spread through the air.
   b. People came to the site to see what had happened.
   c. Vehicles leaving the plant unknowingly carried radiation outside of the facility.
   d. Birds flying in the vicinity of the facility carried radiation to other areas.

LIVEWORKSHEETS