

Name _____

Skill: Reading Comprehension

Read the story and answer the questions.

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are spinning tropical storms with winds of at least seventy-four miles per hour. They are born over tropical seas just north or south of the equator where the water is warm and the air is heavy with water vapor. Hurricanes begin as bands of thunderstorms that start spinning when they collide with tropical winds. As the storm winds draw warm air upward, huge amounts of water vapor change to rain. This process gives off energy called latent heat. Latent heat is the fuel that whips ordinary storms into a monstrous swirl of wind and rain hundreds of kilometers wide. An average hurricane drops more than 2.4 billion gallons of rain every day. Built up by winds, a wall of sea water up to 20 feet high, called a storm surge, forms under the storm. When the hurricane hits land, this storm surge, together with rain and winds, can cause great damage. In 1991, a hurricane struck Bangladesh, killing thirty-five thousand people. Fortunately, the strength of a hurricane does not last long once it is inland.

1. What is the main idea of this story?

2. Hurricanes have wind speeds of at least _____ miles per hour.

- A. One hundred twenty-five
- B. Ninety-two
- C. Seventy-four

3. How do hurricanes begin to form?

4. What is a storm surge?

5. What happens once a hurricane hits land? (Circle the answer)

- A. The storm strengthens
- B. The storm goes back out to sea
- C. The storm weakens