





### Returning to the Text

- Reread the legal document to answer these text-dependent questions.
  - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
1. According to this document, why and how does the federal government step in to assist state and local governments in the event of a disaster?  
Disasters cause hardships to individuals and families and disrupt normal state and local government functions. The federal government steps in to help provide “aid, assistance, and emergency services, and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of devastated areas” in a timely way.
  2. What is the primary purpose of this document? Who is the intended audience?  
This document offers state and local governments an overview of the role the federal government will play in helping deal with a disaster and the type of aid the federal government will provide during a disaster. Given this context, it can be inferred that the most likely audience would be federal, state, and local government officials.
  3. According to subsection (b), what is the government’s responsibility in times of disaster?  
The government’s responsibility is to “alleviate the suffering and damage” caused by disasters.
  4. How do subsections (a) and (b) differ in purpose? What is the overall effect of using these text features?  
Subsection (a) states that special measures are necessary in times of disaster, while subsection (b) states the Congress’s intent to provide federal aid to state and local governments in times of disaster and how it will do so. Clearly defined sections show that this text has a functional and legal purpose.

### As You Read

- As you read “Day Long Efforts to Repair Levee Fail,” underline words and phrases that help you visualize the scene.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

**9 RETURNING TO THE TEXT:** Have students answer the text-dependent questions in small groups. If they have difficulty, scaffold the questions by rephrasing them or breaking them down into smaller parts. See the Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions boxes for suggestions.

**10** As students move to the next text, explain that it is a front-page news article from *The Times-Picayune*, a prominent newspaper in New Orleans. It was published two days after Hurricane Katrina came ashore in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, approximately 70 miles from New Orleans.



### TEACHER TO TEACHER

You may want to display *The Times-Picayune’s* website and share some information about the publication.

### Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions

1. **According to this document, why and how does the federal government step in to assist state and local governments in the event of a disaster?** Look for the words “governments and communities.” Why is federal assistance “necessary”? [RI.11–12.2](#)
2. **What is the primary purpose of this document? Who is its intended audience?** What does the document’s title tell you about its purpose? Who or what receives “assistance” under the document’s provisions? [RI.11–12.6](#)
3. **According to subsection (b), what is the government’s responsibility in times of disaster?** Look for the word “responsibilities” in subsection (b). [RI.11–12.2](#)
4. **How do subsections (a) and (b) differ in purpose? What is the overall effect of using these text features?** Reread the introductions for each subsection and use what you know about outlining to address this question. [RI.11–12.5](#)

## ACTIVITY 4.5 continued

**11** Read the As You Read and About the Author sections with your students. Help them understand the instructions for annotation for the next text they will read. You may want to share the website for *The Advocate* and explain that although that newspaper is based in Baton Rouge it is a competitor of *The Times-Picayune*.

**12 Vocabulary Development:** Discuss the Word Connections with students. Ask students how the words are similar in the meaning, based on the word *lever*.

**13 FIRST READ:** Have students read the article in pairs and **think-pair-share** to discuss their responses to the Making Observation questions and point out details their partner may have missed.

### TEXT COMPLEXITY

**Overall:** Accessible

**Lexile:** 1130L

**Qualitative:** Moderate Difficulty

**Task:** Moderate (Analyze)

**14** As students are reading, monitor their progress. Be sure they are engaged with the text and underlining phrases that help them visualize the scene.

## 4.5

### WORD CONNECTIONS

**Etymology**  
**Levee** is a noun derived from the French word *lever*, “to raise.” A levee is a wall or raised ridge of soil alongside a river, built to prevent flooding. Other words derived from the word *lever* include alleviate, elevate, elevator, leverage, levity, and relieve.

### My Notes

### About the Author



Dan Shea (b. 1963) is the publisher of *The Advocate*. Prior to this role, Shea served as the managing editor of *The Times-Picayune* for 19-years. At *The Times-Picayune*, Shea supervised newsroom operations, presentations, photography, and copyediting. He also played a pivotal role in the continued print and online coverage of the harrowing days after Hurricane Katrina. The reporting under Shea’s leadership led *The Times-Picayune* to win the Breaking News Pulitzer Prize in 2006.

### Article

# Daylong Efforts to Repair Levee Fail

by Dan Shea

*The Times-Picayune*, August 31, 2005

**1** New Orleans became an unimaginable scene of water, fear and suffering Tuesday after a levee breach in the 17th Street Canal sent billions of gallons of Lake Pontchartrain coursing through the city.

**2** As the day wore on, the only dry land was a narrow band from the French Quarter<sup>1</sup> and parts of Uptown, the same small strip that was settled by Bienville<sup>2</sup> amid the swamps.

**3** On Tuesday night, it appeared the city was returning to swamp when a daylong effort to shore the levee near the Hammond Highway failed. Mayor Ray Nagin said pumps were being overwhelmed and warned that a new deluge would bury the city in up to 15 feet of water.

**4** With solid water from the lake to the French Quarter, the inundation and depopulation of an entire American city was at hand.

**5** “Truth to tell, we’re not too far from filling in the bowl,” said Terry Ebbert, the city’s director of homeland security. The waters were still rising at 3 inches per hour, and eventually could move close to the French Quarter levee.

**6** Although the breach occurred on the Orleans side of the canal, it did not spare the Jefferson side. Water found its way into much of the east bank, meeting the flow that came in from the west from Hurricane Katrina’s storm surge Monday.

<sup>1</sup> The French Quarter is New Orleans’s oldest neighborhood.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville was governor of Louisiana and founder of New Orleans.

### Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions

**5. Which major levee breach is the focus of this article? At the time of printing, what were the plans for repairing it? How will this help rescue efforts? Reread paragraph 1. Which levee is named? Reread paragraphs 26 and 27. What does Ebbert say is to be done after rescue efforts? RI.11–12.2**

4.5

My Notes

7 An accurate tally of death was hard to determine. Five deaths related to Katrina have been confirmed in Jefferson Parish<sup>3</sup>, officials said. There also are seven people missing who decided to ride out Katrina on Grand Isle.

...

8 As to the living, with the absence of cars and electric motors in the powerless city, a sad tableau played itself out in an eerie quiet.

9 All day, a weary army of storm victims trudged through waist-deep muddy water toward the Superdome, where more than 20,000 people took refuge. The next problem is what to do with them. Late Tuesday Gov. Blanco ordered them out, saying the facility was too damaged to house people and the atmosphere too dangerous. Officials said the National Guard soon would begin driving them out to dry ground, then airlift them out of southeast Louisiana.

10 In other areas, lawlessness took hold.

11 The giant new Wal-Mart in the Lower Garden District was looted, after a limited distribution of supplies broke down in chaos. The entire gun collection was taken.

12 “There are gangs of armed men in the city moving around the city,” Ebbert said.

13 One looter shot a New Orleans police officer, who was in critical condition with a head wound.

14 Although local police focused solely on rescue, a call for help was answered by swarms of deputies from western Louisiana parishes.

15 But cops on the street, cut off from their superiors by a failure of the communications system, complained of chaos.

16 “Put this in your paper,” one officer on Canal Street said. “They told us nothing. We were unprepared. We are completely on our own.”

17 If it wasn’t coordinated, the rescue was heroic.

18 Firefighters, police and Coast Guardsmen waded through water and climbed to roofs.

19 “We’ve got boats everywhere,” said Capt. Tim Bayard of the New Orleans Police Department. “We’re going to try and get who we can get and take them to higher ground. We may have to come back for some.”

20 They were joined by an armada of Louisiana sportsmen in flat-bottomed boats, who responded to an appeal for help.

21 Ferdinand Emory rescued about 100 people, ten at a time in his boat.

22 Ebbert estimated 1,500 to 2,000 people were saved in Lakeview and Mid-City.

A woman is carried out of floodwaters after being trapped in her home after Hurricane Katrina.



<sup>3</sup> Jefferson Parish is one of 64 parishes (rather than counties) into which Louisiana is divided.

Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions

6. What is the implied connection between the events in paragraphs 11 and 12? Reread both paragraphs. What happened at the new Wal-Mart? What was happening in the city? What connection is unspoken between the two occurrences? [RI.11–12.1](#)

7. Summarize paragraphs 10–16. Whom does the officer blame for the chaotic rescue effort? Use details to support your inference. Reread paragraphs 15 and 16. Who are the “they” to whom the officer refers? Why does he feel that he and fellow officers are on their own? [RI.11–12.1](#), [RI.11–12.2](#)



### Returning to the Text

- Reread the article to answer these text-dependent questions.
  - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
5. Which major levee breach is the focus of this article? At the time of printing, what were the plans for repairing it? How will this help rescue efforts?

The article focuses on the levee breach in the 17th Street Canal. Officials plan to drop giant panels and sandbags and to drain the Interstate 10 underpass. Repairing the breach will allow recovery teams into the area, but only after rescue efforts are over.

6. What is the implied connection between the events in paragraphs 11 and 12?

The writer implies that the armed men of paragraph 11 are the looters who stole the guns from the Wal-Mart in paragraph 12 or that looters in general were stealing guns to arm themselves.

7. Summarize paragraphs 10–16. Whom does the officer blame for the chaotic rescue effort? Use details to support your inference.

Paragraphs 10–16 describe the lack of organization in New Orleans after the hurricane. In paragraph 16, the officer says, “They told us nothing... We are completely on our own.” We can infer that he is referring to his superiors, since paragraph 15 states that “cops on the streets” were “cut off from their superiors.”

8. Why do Aleck Scallan and others have no idea when they will be picked up from the overpass?

Earlier paragraphs say that local police are focused solely on rescuing people stuck in the flood by dropping them on dry land. Since Scallan and others are now on dry land, they are less of a priority than people in immediate need of rescue, despite being stranded. Also, the article states breach repair will be another key focus of first responders.

### As You Read

- Underline the priorities that President Bush mentions in his speech.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

**16 RETURNING TO THE TEXT:** Have students answer the text-dependent questions with their reading partners. If they have difficulty, scaffold the questions by rephrasing them or breaking them down into smaller parts. See the Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions boxes for suggestions.

**17** After students have analyzed the news story, engage in a brief discussion about how the article connects to any of the critical lenses they have studied. Are economic, cultural, gender, or historical elements evident in the text?







### Returning to the Text

- Reread the speech to answer these text-dependent questions.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

9. Based on details in the text, infer the **rhetorical context** of this speech.

The president seems to be addressing the public relatively soon after Hurricane Katrina, based on the fact that he says he recently flew over the affected area. His purpose is to inform the public of the government's planned response to the disaster and to reassure the public.

10. According to President Bush, what are the federal government's three priorities? How would you categorize them?

The three priorities are "to save lives" through search and rescue, "to sustain lives" by providing necessities, and "executing a comprehensive recovery effort" to restore and rebuild the area. The first two priorities deal with helping people, while the third deals primarily with logistics.

11. What does President Bush mean by "major assets" in paragraph 6? What examples does he provide?

He means military equipment and personnel, including "the USS *Bataan* ...; eight swift water rescue teams; the Iwo Jima Amphibious Readiness Group ...; and the hospital ship USNS *Comfort*."

12. What does President Bush compare charitable relief agencies to in paragraph 14? How might this comparison appeal to his audience?

Bush calls relief agencies "the armies of compassion." This draws a figurative comparison to actual armies. This might appeal to his target audience since armies connote strength and large numbers of well-organized soldiers working toward a goal.

13. How does President Bush structure paragraph 15 to appeal to his audience?

Bush first acknowledges the audience's fears, then offers hope. For example, the first three sentences are somber, stressing the difficult recovery ahead. The fourth sentence starts with "But," to counter negative opinions. Next, he says that "the days seem awfully dark," then follows it with another *but* sentence—stressing his confidence in the future.

### 24 RETURNING TO THE TEXT:

Have students answer the text-dependent questions independently. If they have difficulty, scaffold the questions by rephrasing them or breaking them down into smaller parts. See the Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions boxes for suggestions.

### 25

After students have read all three texts and answered the text-dependent questions, lead a brief discussion about the connections apparent among the three texts. Guide students to consider the function of each text. Ask students to evaluate how each text's purpose may affect the choice of language and structure.





