



## You Be the Reporter: Project Guidelines

### Research and Writing:

With the help of your teacher, select a team of 3 other students to work with on this project.

**Each person** in the group should complete **a story** choosing **one** of the options below:

- Using the Internet and other primary resources, research Hurricane Katrina and write a **news story** related to the storm. These stories should follow the standard news story format and include the W's and the H.
- Using blogs and other Web sites offering first-hand accounts of what people experienced during Hurricane Katrina, write a **feature story** about people involved in the storm. Choose a unique angle for your story. Some sample ideas include:
  - Telling the story of a relief worker or first responder who assisted others during the storm and the days after Hurricane Katrina.
  - Tell the story of someone who was not a Gulf Coast native but was there for business or leisure travel and caught in the storm.
  - Tell the story of a child or young person who weathered the storm and how it affected him/her and the whole family.
  - Tell the story of how the culture and spirit of New Orleans has been affected by the loss of art, museums, historical places, and displacement of the population to cities throughout the U.S.
- After researching Hurricane Katrina, its victims, the nation's response to Katrina, and the subsequent clean-up and rebuilding in the Gulf Coast Region, create an **editorial column or letter to the editor** addressing opinion driven topics. Some sample ideas include:
  - The local, state, and national government's emergency preparedness and response to the devastation caused by Katrina.
  - Arguments for and against rebuilding the city of New Orleans, particularly the areas of the city located below sea level.
  - Who is responsible for taking care of and rescuing people who refused to leave the affected areas, even after they were warned repeatedly.

### Resources

Below you will find a list of NOW resources that can be accessed to provide basic background information about a number of topics related to Hurricane Katrina. Use these and other resources to assist you with researching and generating story ideas.

Name

Date

NOW: “Katrina: The Response”

<http://www.pbs.org/now/society/katrinatownhall.html>

This resource features first-hand stories and comments about the effects of Hurricane Katrina and the government response to the needs of people in the Gulf Coast Region.

NOW: “The Aftermath”

[http://www.pbs.org/now/transcript/transcriptNOW135\\_full.html](http://www.pbs.org/now/transcript/transcriptNOW135_full.html)

This program transcript discusses the effects of Hurricane Katrina and how the Gulf Coast Region’s natural protection from such storms, the wetlands, is disappearing.

NOW: “The City in a Bowl”

[http://www.pbs.org/now/transcript/transcript\\_neworleans.html](http://www.pbs.org/now/transcript/transcript_neworleans.html)

This story transcript describes scientist Joe Suhayda’s predictions about what would happen to the city of New Orleans if it were ever struck by a major hurricane.

NOW: “Losing Ground”

<http://www.pbs.org/now/science/delta.html>

This report examines the disappearance of the Mississippi River Delta and the environmental, economic, and human consequences of this problem.

NOW: “Building in the Bulls-eye”

<http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/floodinsurance.html>

This resource looks at flooding in coastal areas and funding for assisting these areas when catastrophes strike.

NOW: “Race in Class in the Delta South”

<http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/deltasouth.html>

This feature provides information and statistics related to income, education, and the poverty level in relation to race in the Gulf Coast region.

### **Constructing Your Project:**

**NOTES: Your Teacher will assign the medium for completion of the project. Also, use the General Evaluation Form to guide you as you edit one another’s work and fine-tune your own writing.**

- Podcasting:** Create an Internet radio program that you can share with students worldwide using MP3 files. Visit the Education Podcast Network (<http://epnweb.org/>) for details about how to get started with podcasting.
  - When writing your news and feature stories and editorials, construct them in the form for scripts. This will allow different students from your group to play the role of reporter, the person being interviewed, and the commentator (in the case of editorials).
  - Once your scripts are written, assign each person in the group to play a “role” in several stories.

Name

Date

- Decide on the flow of your Internet radio program and write all of the transitions that will occur between stories.
- Select music or special sound effects to be used with a given story.
- Practice your script and the use of special effects.
- Record your Internet radio program using the available technology.
- Share your program online using the Education Podcast Network or another similar resource.

**Video News:** Create a video news program that you can share with students via videotape or a digital format.

- When writing your news and feature stories and editorials, construct them in the form for scripts. This will allow different students from your group to play the role of reporter, the person being interviewed, and the commentator (in the case of editorials).
- Once your scripts are written, assign each person in the group to play a “role” in several stories.
- Decide on the flow of your newscast and write all of the transitions that will occur between stories.
- Select music or special effects to be used with a given story.
- Select any special costumes or clothing you will need to wear to simulate a television news program as well as the people being interviewed.
- Create a set or select a background that can be used for presenting your newscast. Plan alternate spaces for shooting stories on location (i.e. outdoors, in a gymnasium, etc.)
- Practice your script and the use of music and special effects.
- Record your television program using the available technology.

**Desktop Publishing:** Create a special edition newspaper or magazine dedicated to covering

the news of Hurricane Katrina.

- Utilize desktop publishing software to create your newspaper or magazine.
- Using reputable newspapers and magazines as examples, create layouts that include:
  - Banners
  - Headlines
  - Bylines
  - Photographs (make these authentic by searching for and selecting photos available on the Internet and crediting the source)
  - Captions
  - Graphics such as maps, charts, or graphs
  - Political cartoons

Print your newspaper or magazine (in color)