

Step-by-step, whiteboard-ready

SCHOLASTIC
SCOPE
 DIGITAL LESSON

Out of the Tornado

Approximate
time to
complete
lesson:
three to four
class periods



FEATURED SKILL

Key Ideas and Details

SUMMARY

In this multigenre, multimedia lesson, students will learn about a devastating tornado through an article, a first-person account, a poem, and a video. They will use an activity sheet to explore the suffering caused by the disaster and how the residents of Henryville overcame it, which will help them respond to a writing prompt. Finally, students will research something that happened in their own town or state and write a poem about it.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- to read and understand an article, poem, and first-person account
- to pull key ideas from an author video
- to participate in class discussion
- to respond to a writing prompt
- to conduct research and compose a poem based on a real event

MATERIALS

Click the links below.

- student copies of the article “Out of the Tornado” from the September 24, 2012, issue of *Scope*
- *Scope* activity sheet [“A Tornado’s Effects”](#)
- *Scope* video [“Author Talk: Lauren Tarshis on ‘Out of the Tornado’”](#)
- *Scope* activity sheet [“Video Questions”](#)
- Dramatic reading of the poem [“The Tornado”](#)
- *Scope* activity sheet [“Analyzing ‘The Tornado’”](#) (optional)
- [answer key](#) for video and activity sheets

1 PREVIEWING AND READING ARTICLE

Duration: 25 minutes

Have your students open their magazines to the article “Out of the Tornado.” Ask students to preview the text features, including the photos, captions, and map. Then invite a student to read aloud the As You Read box on page 4.

Tell students that in addition to the main article, they will also be reading a first-person account and a poem and watching a video. Ask: How do you think multiple sources will be useful in understanding how this tornado affected the town of Henryville? (*Together, they will provide more details, information, and points of view.*)

Now have students read the article individually, or call on students to read aloud for the class. They should also read the first-person account on page 7.

2 FINDING TEXT EVIDENCE

Duration: 15 minutes

Project and distribute the activity sheet “A Tornado’s Effects.” Ask a student to read aloud the directions, which include a quotation from

Helen Keller. As a class, briefly discuss what the quote means. Then let students work in groups to complete the first two rows of the activity sheet, finding text evidence in the main article and the first-person account to support the quote. When each group is done, call on a few volunteers to come up to the whiteboard and complete the first two rows.

3 VIDEO VIEWING AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Duration: 20 minutes

Distribute the activity sheet “Video Questions,” and give students a moment to preview it. Show the video “Author Talk: Lauren Tarshis on ‘Out of the Tornado.’” (You may need to show it more than once.) Then have students answer the questions in their groups. Circulate the room to make sure each group is on track. When students are finished, return to the activity sheet “A Tornado’s Effects.” Have students complete the third row. Again, have a volunteer complete that row on the whiteboard.

4 POETRY READING AND ANALYSIS

Duration: 20 minutes

Play our audio version of Irene Latham’s poem

“The Tornado” as students read along in their magazines. Ask: What details from the article did the poet incorporate into the poem? If time allows, distribute the activity sheet “Analyzing ‘The Tornado’” for students to complete in their groups. Circulate the room to guide groups through any questions they may have. Then have students fill out the final row of “A Tornado’s Effects.”

5 WRITING PROMPT

Duration: 30 minutes, or one class period

Direct students to use their responses in “A Tornado’s Effects” to respond to the writing prompt on page 9. In addition to the texts, they should use details from the video in their responses.

6 CULMINATING ACTIVITY: RESEARCH AND POETRY WRITING (OPTIONAL)

Duration: 30 minutes, or one class period

In this lesson, students have learned how Lauren Tarshis wrote her story “Out of the Tornado,” and they have examined how Irene Latham drew on a real event as a source for her poem.

Have students follow this creative process on their own. Tell them to research something in history that affected their town or state, such as a natural disaster or an accident.

As part of their research, they should read several articles and look through several books, as Lauren did. (They should also watch video footage, if it’s available.) Then, using Irene’s poem as a model, they should write a poem about what happened. Encourage them to use some of the same literary devices that Irene uses.