Writing Prompt

The passages talked about the impacts of different natural disasters. Write an informative essay about the effects of severe weather. Use information from the sources in your essay.

Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- read the passages;
- plan your response using a planning sheet;
- write your response; and
- revise and edit your response.

Be sure to include:

- an introduction;
- information and evidence from the passages as support
- a conclusion that is related to the information presented.

Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Write your draft in your Writing notebook. Your final draft will be typed.

Source 1: Hurricanes

If you live in a southern state like Florida or Georgia, you might be familiar with the effects of a hurricane. A hurricane is a very large and powerful storm. The winds of hurricanes can be strong enough to move animals, trees, and even buildings. Hurricanes can bring heavy rainfalls, which can cause flooding, especially near the ocean.

Wind blowing over warm ocean water produces clouds. When weather conditions are just right, a large spinning system of winds can cause stormy weather. Once the winds reach 74 miles per hour, the storm is classified as a hurricane.

From above, a hurricane looks like a very large disk made of clouds. This mass of clouds can be several hundred miles across and a few miles thick. This mass of clouds spins around in circles.

At the center of the hurricane is an area called the eye. The eye is an area with very little, or no winds or rain. The most powerful part of the storm is in a ring just beyond the eye in an area called the *eye wall*.

Luckily, meteorologists can use a special tool for detecting hurricanes and predicting their path. Once a hurricane forms there is nothing people can do to stop it or prevent it from occurring. When a hurricane is coming, the best thing to do is to get prepared and stay out of the way!

Source 2: Tornadoes

A tornado is a swirling, funnel-shaped column of wind that gets its start from a thunderstorm. Thunderclouds form when warm, wet air collides with cool, dry air. Then, strong winds form into a wide tube of spinning air. When the tube touches the ground, it becomes a tornado.

On a spring night in 2007, disaster struck a small town in Kansas called Greensburg. Shortly before 10 p.m., a siren went off. A mile-wide tornado was approaching Greensburg, and it wasn't just any tornado! It was a category EF5, the most powerful kind there is.

Its winds were estimated to be more than 200 miles per hour. In less than ten minutes, the town was destroyed and ten people lost their lives.

When the tornado had passed, people clambered through the rubble. Cars and trucks had been thrown about. Homes were crushed, or simply ripped from the ground. "There's really nothing left," said one resident.

The people of Greensburg lived right in the middle of "Tornado Alley," an area that spans eight states in the Central United States. This region is known as a thunderstorm and tornado factory. It has just what storms need to get started: cool, dry air from the Arctic mixing with warm, humid air from the Gulf of Mexico.