

Winter Weather and Disasters

Welcome to Talk Time!

Discuss the idiom of the week – “Show up”

Let’s get started

Read the news story together.



This year weather forecasters predict a cold, snowy winter. When it is snowy in the Seattle area, it is difficult to go places. During a snowstorm in the winter of 2008, only half of the buses operated. Many buses got stuck on hills.

This year King Country Road Services will use sand, salt and anti-icing material to help keep the roads safe. But, if there are really bad snowstorms, Metro plans to limit service.

The Seattle area sometimes has other kinds of bad winter weather. For example, in 2007, floods closed parts of I-5. In 2006, a windstorm caused power outages in more than a million homes and businesses. It is important to know how to be safe in these storms.

Source: Gilmore, Susan. “Seattle bus routes now have a plan for snow.” *The Seattle Times*. 2 Nov. 2010.
Photograph: Taken December 18, 2008 on Highway 520 in Redmond.

Discuss as a group.



- Have you ever experienced a snowstorm? Explain.
- Have you ever lived in Washington during winter? What advice would you give to someone who is new to Washington?

Interview your partner about weather. Say, “In your native country do you have _____?” and ask him/her to explain. Take notes as you listen.

Name	Snow and ice	Floods	Strong wind	Hot sun	Thunderstorms
					

Share as a group: Whose country has snow, floods, strong wind, etc.?

Conversation skills

As we discuss, let's ask each other questions using the words *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*. Let's also use the phrase "Tell me more." The best questions are the questions YOU ask!

Discussion

Discuss questions as a group.



What is the worst weather you have experienced? Describe.

Is it important to know the weather forecast? Why or why not? How often do you watch the weather forecast on TV or read it in the newspaper?

Tell a story about when the power went out. Where were you? How did you feel?

How can you be safe during a power outage? What can you eat? What can you do to stay warm? (See handout.)

Do you have an emergency kit? What items should an emergency kit include? (See handout.)

What kinds of natural disasters occur in your native country? Explain.

Have you ever experienced an earthquake? What happened? How did you feel?

Where is the best place to go during an earthquake? Describe where you would go in your house.

What kinds of injuries happen during earthquakes? How can you prevent such injuries?

Have you ever called 911? What happened? When should you call 911? (See handout.)

Have you ever asked a neighbor for help in an emergency? Explain. Would you feel comfortable asking neighbors for help if there were an emergency in the U.S.? Why or why not?

How can you stay calm in a storm or disaster? How would you help someone who is frightened?

Think about different scenarios. With partners, talk about what you would do. Then, share ideas as a group.

Scenario 1: Your kids are at school. It suddenly starts to snow at 11am. The roads are quickly covered with snow and it's hard to drive. How will your kids get home from school?

Scenario 2: You are studying at school until 9pm. A windstorm blows down power lines, and trees fall over the road. How will you get home? What will you do?

LAST 10 MINUTES: Fill out emergency contact cards. With partners, talk about what you will do this week to prepare for an emergency.