

Storms

The word "storm" comes from the Old English word that means "to stir up." A **storm** is any disturbance in the atmosphere with strong wind and usually rain, snow, sleet, hail, or thunder and lightning. Different types of storms exist. **Rainstorms** are not dangerous unless the amount of rain or the ground conditions cause flooding. **Flash flooding** occurs when rain falls so quickly that the ground cannot absorb it. **Thunderstorms** can be dangerous because of the lightning or because of heavy rain or hail that accompanies it. Hail can be as large as a softball and can dent cars and kill animals and people. Wind during a storm can sometimes be dangerous by causing flying debris.

A **hurricane** is a powerful, swirling storm that forms over tropical waters. It moves over the ocean like a huge, spinning top. A hurricane is dangerous because of its heavy rain, which can cause flooding, and high wind speeds, which can knock down trees, destroy homes, and overturn cars. The center of a hurricane is the **eye**. It is very calm. The area around the eye is called the **eye wall** and is a ring of storm clouds full of rain and strong winds.

Hurricanes that occur in the Philippines or the China Sea are called typhoons. Hurricanes can have winds that travel at more than 185 miles per hour and can be 300 miles in diameter.

Monsoons occur in the Indian Ocean and southern Asia. A monsoon is a seasonal wind that brings very heavy rainfall and even flooding. For half of the year, India is very dry, but for the other half of the year, the monsoons bring much needed rain. Monsoons are formed when moist wind blows inland from the Indian Ocean. The skies grow dark, and rain sweeps over the country. After the six months of rain ends, the land is dry for six months, and then the monsoons come again.

Hurricanes and monsoons are **tropical storms**. A tropical storm can also be a tropical cyclone (storm with rotating winds), which has winds that are strong but not as strong as a hurricane. Tropical storms are often called **typhoons** in the Pacific, **tropical cyclones** by meteorologists, and **hurricanes** by the Western world.

Answer the Following

1. Give three names for tropical storms. _____
2. How can rainstorms be dangerous? _____
3. How can thunderstorms be dangerous? _____

4. Name one good and one bad consequence of a monsoon. _____

5. What types of damage do hurricanes cause? _____

