

Natural disasters

Part A

Objectives

By the end of this part of Unit 7 you will be able to:

- discuss the causes of natural disasters
- listen to a text about flooding in Bangladesh
- talk about a natural disaster
- use adjectives with *so ...* and *such ...*
- read a report about an earthquake in Chile
- write a summary of a news report
- use prepositions of time
- make notes to help understand and remember what you read
- expand your notes into a summary
- use collocations and word partners
- take part in a general knowledge quiz.

A7.1 Introduction: Natural disasters

- 1** What do you know about the following natural disasters? Look up their meanings in your dictionary.

tsunami wave	volcanic eruption	earthquake	avalanche	cyclone
flood	drought	tornado	mud slide	blizzard

- 2** Work in your groups to discuss the causes of each disaster, then match the following places to one of the above natural occurrences.

Haiti	Bangladesh	Indian Ocean	USA	Iceland
Indonesia	Pacific Ocean	Ethiopia	Canada	European Alps



A7.2 Listening: Floods in Bangladesh

- 1** Look at the following pictures, read the headline and predict what the listening text will be about.





Why Bangladesh floods are so bad

The South-Asian country of Bangladesh is prone to the natural disaster of flooding ...

2 Now listen as your teacher reads the text and check your predictions. Were they correct?

3 Listen to the text again and answer the following questions.

- 1 What two natural features of Bangladesh lead to flooding?
- 2 When do floods normally appear annually?
- 3 What four major rivers flow through Bangladesh?
- 4 What is the main cause of the flooding?
- 5 How are the annual floods useful?
- 6 What are the four main categories of floods?
- 7 What is the capital of Bangladesh?
- 8 How can the people of Bangladesh be affected when the flood waters go down?
- 9 What three occurrences may also affect flooding in Bangladesh today?



A7.3 Speaking: Talking about a natural disaster

Which of these disasters do you think are man-made and which are natural? Some of the ones in the box below can be natural, some man-made, and some with elements of both.

For example:

Flooding is caused by heavy rain but made worse by deforestation.

flooding	earthquake	bush fire	drought
volcanic eruption	oil spill	soil erosion	

Work in groups to select one of these disasters, then brainstorm in your group the causes for the disaster and any words related to it, and present your results to the rest of the class.

A7.4 Language focus: Adjectives with *so* ... and *such* ...

1 Decide if these statements about adjectives are **True** or **False**.

- a An adjective gives us more information about a noun.
- b Adjectives are words like *red* and *big* which tell us what things look like.
- c We can put an adjective before and after a noun.
- d We can put an adjective after a verb.

2 So ... Read these sentences:

- a This exercise is *so* long!
- b It is *so* hot!
- c Poems can be *so* long that they take up a whole book.

1 In which of these sentences does *so* make the adjective stronger?

2 In which of these sentences does *so* explain why something is happening?

- *So* is used in this pattern:
BE + *so* + adjective
- *So* can be used after certain verbs like *be, seem, feel, feel, appear, looks, smells*.

Make sentences from this table. Write them in your exercise book.

He	is		angry!
She	smells		difficult!
The question	tastes	so	ill!
The food	seems		delicious!
The meal	appears		good!
The teacher	looks		happy!

3 Now put *that* at the end of each of your sentences and add your own ending.

Example:

The volcanic eruption was so strong that it destroyed the small island.

4 Such ...

We can also use *such* in this way and with the same meaning, but it behaves differently:

He is *such* a good student!

Don't be *such* a coward!

- *Such* is used in this pattern:
BE + *such* + *a* + adjective + *noun*
- We don't use *a* before nouns that usually take it:
e.g. *such beautiful flowers*
such delicious food
- *Such* can be used after all verbs.

Make sentences from this table. Write them in your exercise book.

She	is			good	teacher.
He	makes	such	(a / an)	crowded	posho.
It	writes			untidy	poem.
				hot	bus.
				delicious	room.
				beautiful	weather.

5 Now put *that* at the end of each of your sentences and add your own ending.

Example:

It was such a strong eruption that it destroyed the small island.

6 Complete these sentences with *so* or *such*. Write them in your exercise book.

- 1 It's _____ a hot day! It must be nearly 40 degrees.
- 2 I feel _____ hot! I must sit in the shade.
- 3 Our teacher was _____ pleased with us that she didn't give us any homework.
- 4 Makeda has _____ a heavy bag that she can't carry it.
- 5 How nice to see you! It's _____ a long time since we were together.
- 6 I don't like towns. They are _____ noisy.
- 7 There is _____ a lot of rubbish outside! We must clean it up.
- 8 You've eaten _____ much posho that you'll fall asleep.

7 Complete these sentences in your own way. Write them in your exercise book.

- 1 I am so hungry that ...
- 2 I've got such a lot of homework to do that ...
- 3 I feel so hot that ...
- 4 I feel so ... that I want to ...
- 5 I've got such a ... that I'll have to ...

**A7.5 Reading: An earthquake report****1 You have one minute to skim through the following newspaper article, then report the main ideas to your partner.**

TALCA, Chile – One of the largest earthquakes ever recorded tore apart houses, bridges and highways in central Chile on Saturday and sent a tsunami racing halfway around the world. Chileans near the epicentre were tossed about as if shaken by a giant, and the head of the emergency agency said authorities believed at least 300 people were dead.

The magnitude-8.8 quake was felt as far away as Sao Paulo in Brazil, 2,900 kilometres to the east. The full extent of damage remained unclear as dozens of aftershocks – one nearly as powerful as Haiti's devastating January 12 earthquake – shuddered across the disaster-prone Andean nation.

President Michelle Bachelet declared a "state of catastrophe" in central Chile where newly built apartment buildings slumped and fell. Flames devoured a prison. Millions of people fled into streets darkened by the failure of power lines. The collapse of bridges tossed and crushed cars and trucks, and complicated efforts to reach quake-damaged areas by road. At least 214 people were killed and 15 were missing, Bachelet said in a national address on television. While that remained the official estimate, Carmen Fernandez, head of the

National Emergency Agency, said later: "We think the real figure tops 300. And we believe this will continue to grow." Bachelet also said 1.5 million people had been affected by the quake, and officials said 500,000 homes were severely damaged.

In Talca, just 105 kilometres from the epicentre, people sleeping in bed suddenly felt like they were flying through major airplane turbulence as their belongings cascaded around them from the shuddering walls at 3:34 a.m. A deafening roar rose from the convulsing earth as buildings groaned and clattered. The sound of screams was confused with the crash of plates and windows. Then the earth stilled, silence returned and a smell of damp dust rose in the streets, where stunned survivors took refuge.

A journalist emerging into the darkened street scattered with downed power lines saw a man, some of his own bones apparently broken, weeping and caressing the hand of a woman who had died in the collapse of a café. Two other victims lay dead a few metres away.

Also near the epicentre was Concepcion, one of the country's largest cities, where a 15-storey building collapsed, leaving a few floors intact. "I was on the 8th floor and all of

a sudden I was down here," said Fernando Abarzua, marvelling that he escaped with no major injuries. He said a relative was still trapped in the rubble six hours after the quake, "but he keeps shouting, saying he's OK."

Chilean state television reported that 209 inmates escaped from prison in the city of Chillan, near the epicentre, after a fire broke out. In the capital of Santiago, 325 kilometres to the north-east, the national Fine Arts Museum was badly damaged and an apartment building's two-storey parking lot pancaked, smashing about 50 cars whose alarms rang incessantly. A car dangled from a collapsed overpass while overturned vehicles lay scattered below. "I can now say in all surety that seat belts save lives in automobiles," said Cristian Alcaino, who survived the fall in his car.

While most modern buildings survived, a bell tower collapsed on the Nuestra Senora de la Providencia church and several hospitals were evacuated due to damage. Santiago's airport was closed, with smashed windows, partially collapsed ceilings and destroyed pedestrian walkways in the passenger terminals. The capital's subway was shut as well, and transportation was further limited because hundreds of buses were stuck behind a damaged bridge.

Chile's main seaport, in Valparaiso about 120 kilometres from Santiago, was closed while damage was assessed. Two oil refineries shut down, and lines of cars snaked out of service stations across the country as nervous drivers

rushed to fill up. President-elect Sebastian Pinera angrily reported seeing some looting while flying over damaged areas. He vowed "to fight with maximum energy looting attempts that I saw with my own eyes."

The jolt set off a tsunami that swamped San Juan Bautista village on Robinson Crusoe Island off Chile, killing at least five people and leaving 11 missing. Huge waves also damaged several government buildings on the island. Pedro Forteza, a pilot who frequently flies to the island, said, "The village was destroyed by the waves, including the historic cemetery. I would say that 20 or 30 per cent has disappeared."

On the mainland, several huge waves inundated part of the major port city of Talcahuano. A large boat was swept more than a block inland. Waves also flooded hundreds of houses in the town of Vichato, in the BioBio region.

The surge of water raced across the Pacific, setting off alarm sirens in Hawaii, Polynesia and Tonga and prompting warnings across all 53 nations ringing the vast ocean. Tsunami waves washed across Hawaii, where little damage was reported. The first tsunami waves hit Japan's outlying islands early Sunday, but the initial waves were small and most of the Pacific islands already in its path had been spared damage.

Saturday's quake matched a 1906 temblor off the Ecuadorean coast as the seventh-strongest ever recorded in the world.

By Roberto Candia And Eva Vergara, The Associated Press

- 2** Read the text again and note down the main points, then work with your partner to divide them into two columns: *Fact* or *Opinion*.

A7.6 Language focus: Prepositions of time

We talk about **when** things happen using prepositions of **time**. We use:

- The preposition **in** for months, years, centuries, and long periods.

Examples:

Months	in July
Years	in 1960
Centuries	in the 19 th century
Long periods	in the mornings
Seasons	in summer

- The preposition **at** for a precise time.

Examples:

A precise time	at 7.00 a.m.
The weekend	at the weekend
Night	at night
Festive periods	at Christmas

- The preposition **on** for days and dates.

Examples:

Special days	on my birthday
Days of the week	on Tuesday
Dates	on the 24 th of December

- **Exceptions:**

in the past
at present
in the future

There is **NO** preposition of time if the day / year has **each, every, last, next, this** before it.

Examples:	each year
	every Monday
	last week
	next day
	this week

1 Use suitable prepositions of time to complete the following sentences.

- 1 Aamina promised to meet us _____ ten o'clock.
- 2 We shall hold a meeting of the drama club _____ the last day of term.
- 3 Schools always break for Christmas holidays _____ December.
- 4 Nobody knows what the world will be like _____ the year 2050.
- 5 We always finish school early _____ Fridays.
- 6 Many people go on holiday _____ the dry season.
- 7 We are having a party _____ weekend.
- 8 We have an English lesson _____ day.
- 9 I saw a good film _____ week.
- 10 Can you come to visit me _____ evening?

2 Copy the table into your exercise book, then work in pairs to group the following time phrases under the correct headings.

night two weeks time the following day noon next year
tomorrow afternoon Monday morning midnight February yesterday

in	on	at	∅ (no preposition)

Can you add any other examples of time phrases to your table?

3 Write *in*, *on*, *at* or \emptyset (no preposition) onto separate slips of paper. When your teacher calls out a time phrase, hold up the correct piece of paper.

Example:

next week = ∅



A7.7 Writing: Making notes

Writing notes is a helpful way of understanding and remembering what we read. To make notes, we have to read and understand a text, then write down the main points only. It is a good idea to write notes in points, rather than sentences. Here are some tips:

- a** Use headings and sub-headings.
- b** Use numbers and letters where helpful.
- c** Use abbreviations.
- d** Write only the important words. Complete sentences are not necessary.
- e** Your notes should be clear so that you can understand them easily when you come back to them.

1 Read this short text about camels. Decide on:

- 1** a title
- 2** two sub-headings.

Have you ever seen a camel? Some people think it is a strange animal with its long neck, its hump on its back and its famous bad temper. In fact, these animals are ideal for travelling in the desert. They are strong and can carry heavy loads over great distances. During a journey they need very little food and water, both of which are scarce in the desert. In addition, their large flat feet help them walk over the sand, which is very often very soft in the desert.

2 Now make notes under each of the sub-headings.

A7.8 Writing: Expanding notes into a summary

On 26 December, 2004 a 9.0 magnitude earthquake struck off the Indonesian island of Sumatra, triggering a tsunami that killed tens of thousands of people in Indian Ocean coastal communities. Here are some statistics in note form of the human and environmental devastation left in its wake in Indonesia.

Time of main tremor: 07:58 local time on 26 December 2004, (00:58 GMT).

Epicentre locality: 250 km south-south-east of Banda Aceh, Indonesia and 1,600 km north-west of Jakarta.

Overall Damage: Total damage of the tsunami is estimated at \$4.5 billion-\$5 billion.

63% of total damage and losses were in housing, commerce, agriculture, and fisheries, and transport vehicles and services.

25% of total damage and losses were in the public sector.

Height and speed of tsunamis: In the open ocean, just 50 centimetres high but travelling at up to 800 km/h. However, the waves grew and slowed as the sea got more shallow towards coasts. Waves were up to 10 metres on the coastline of Sumatra near the epicentre, 4 metres in Thailand, Sri Lanka and Somalia.

Distance waves travelled inland: Up to 2,000 metres.

Number of countries damaged: 13, including Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, The Maldives and Somalia.

Casualties: At least 226,000 dead, including 166,000 in Indonesia, 38,000 in Sri Lanka, 16,000 in India 5,300 in Thailand and 5,000 foreign tourists.

Number of people injured: Over 500,000.

Potential additional deaths from infectious diseases: 150,000.

Number of people affected: Up to 5 million people lost homes, or access to food and water.

Number of children affected: Around a third of the dead are children, and 1.5 million have been wounded, displaced or lost families.

Number of people left without the means to make a living: One million.

Date of last major tsunami in the Indian Ocean: 1945.



Ask and answer questions in your group about the disaster, then make a summary of the event using bullet points for the following headings:

Height of waves on Sumatran coastline

Distance waves travelled inland

Total number of houses destroyed

Total number of people dead

Total of people affected

Total number of children affected

A7.9 Writing: Summarising a news report

1 Read the following report about the 2010 Haiti earthquake and summarise the main information using bullet points.

The 2010 Haiti earthquake was a catastrophic 7.0 magnitude earthquake, with an epicentre near the town of Léogâne, approximately 25 km west of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. The earthquake occurred at 16:53 local time on Tuesday, 12 January 2010. By 24 January, at least 52 aftershocks measuring 4.5 or greater had been recorded. An estimated three million people were affected by the quake; the Haitian Government reported that an estimated 230,000 people had died, 300,000 had been injured and 1,000,000 made homeless. They also estimated that 250,000 residences and 30,000 commercial buildings had collapsed or were severely damaged.



The earthquake caused major damage to Port-au-Prince, Jacmel and other settlements in the region. Many notable landmark buildings were significantly damaged or destroyed, including the Presidential Palace, the National Assembly building, the Port-au-Prince Cathedral, and the main jail. Among those killed were Archbishop of Port-au-Prince, Joseph Serge Miot, and opposition leader Micha Gaillard. The headquarters of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, located in the capital, collapsed, killing many, including the Mission's Chief.

Many countries responded to appeals for humanitarian aid, pledging funds and dispatching rescue and medical teams, engineers and support personnel. Communication systems, air, land, and sea transport facilities, hospitals, and electrical networks had been damaged by the earthquake, which hampered rescue and aid efforts; confusion over who was in charge, air traffic congestion, and problems with prioritisation of flights further complicated early relief work. Port-au-Prince's morgues were quickly overwhelmed with many tens of thousands of bodies having to be buried in mass graves. As rescues tailed off, supplies, medical care and sanitation became priorities. Delays in aid distribution led to angry appeals from aid workers and survivors, and some looting and sporadic violence being observed.

On 22 January the United Nations noted that the emergency phase of the relief operation was drawing to a close, and on the following day the Haitian government officially called off the search for survivors.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_Haiti_earthquake

2 Now write a similar news report for the BBC or a newspaper about the Indonesian tsunami, see A7.8, using discourse markers such as *moreover*, *however*, *in addition*, *consequently*, etc. to help structure your report and join two ideas together.

A7.10 Increase your word power: Collocations and word partners

A collocation refers to the way in which some words are always used together, or a particular combination of words is used in this way (for example, *commit a crime*). Each word in the collocation keeps its own meaning. Collocations can consist of an adjective and a noun, a verb and a noun, a verb and an adverb, a noun and a verb or even a noun and a noun.

1 Match a word from the topic with their natural collocations / word partners.

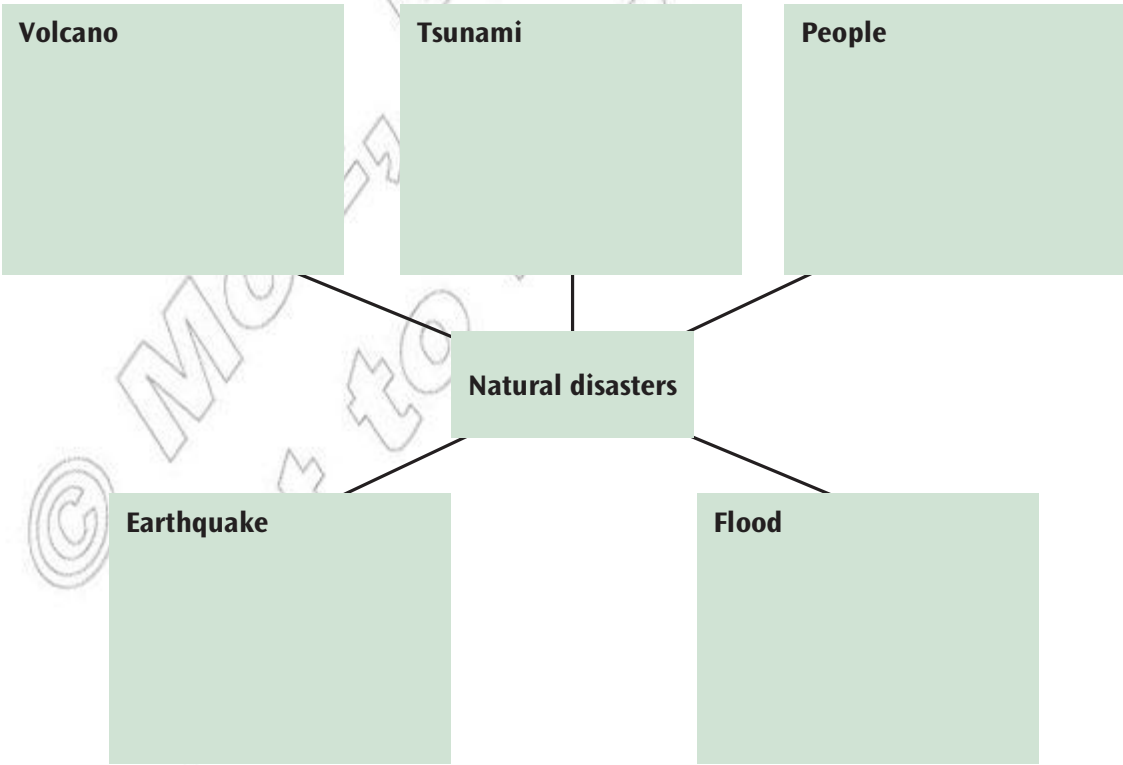
Example:

man-made disaster

- volcanic disaster
- mud warming
- tsunami eruption
- global flood
- man-made disease
- water-borne slide
- flash wave

2 Copy the vocabulary network below into your exercise book, and work in pairs to record the following disaster collocations under the correct headings. Add any further words related to natural disasters that you think collocate.

volcanic eruption flash flood aid worker giant wave collapsed buildings
 ash cloud water surge water-borne disease death toll torrential rain
 earthquake zone coastal areas rescue team earth movements lava flow



Discuss your diagrams with your group and say if you agree or disagree with the classifications you have used.

3 Match the words on the left with their partners on the right to form 'disaster' collocations.

relief	supplies
affected	effort
washed / swept	workers
medical	aid
stricken	areas
aid	away
cut	off
relief	regions
distribute	workers

4 Use the collocations from Exercise 3 to complete the extract from a newspaper article below.

In some cases whole towns have been (1) _____ by the waves. In some of the (2) _____ entire communities are still totally (3) _____ because the surrounding infrastructure has been destroyed by either the tsunami, the earthquake or both. International charity organisations and (4) _____ are finding it hard to (5) _____ including vital (6) _____ to the (7) _____, partly due to the size of the (8) _____ and partly due to the scale of destruction.



A7.11 Speaking: General knowledge quiz

Work in teams to prepare general knowledge questions about natural disasters to ask other teams. In each team, students take it in turns to ask the questions and keep the score. Each team scores two points for the correct answer and one point if a team member uses one of the following phrases to admit they don't know the answer.

Social expressions showing uncertainty:

- I'm afraid that I don't know.
- I'm sorry I don't know.
- I'll have to think about it.
- I'm really not sure.
- I haven't a clue.
- I've forgotten.
- It's no good. I can't remember.

Part B**Objectives**

By the end of this part of Unit 7 you will be able to:

- discuss photos of natural disasters
- read about flooding in Ethiopia
- revise using *anywhere, something, no one, everybody*
- revise active and passive verbs
- classify words you know and don't know
- write a summary of a news report
- plan and write a guided essay
- analyse and write a formal letter
- read a poem about a sudden storm
- set yourself a vocabulary target
- make words from a word square.

**B7.1 Speaking:** Natural disasters

- 1** Look at the photographs above of four different disasters. In your group, choose one disaster and create a story about it, using past tenses.

Example:

(earthquake) The ground shook, then suddenly a huge crack opened up and swallowed the houses. People ...

- 2** Imagine you were a reporter at the scene of one of these disasters. Discuss and record what photographs you would take for a newspaper or magazine, for example of a child stranded in the middle of the lava. Try to use *would* in your descriptions, for example, *I would take a picture of a child*.



B7.2 Reading: Floods in Ethiopia

- 1** Read the following newspaper article about flooding in Ethiopia, then work in pairs to relate it to any other natural disasters in Ethiopia you know of, for example drought. Use the following prompts to introduce your reminiscences:

It reminds me of ...

I remember ...

It sounds like ...

Fears of more floods in Ethiopia

The Guardian, Friday 18 August 2006

After 12 days of heavy rains that have left 626 people dead in Ethiopia, the authorities yesterday urged villagers to move to higher ground because of fears of further flooding. Rivers in the south, north and east of the country have burst their banks, prompting a disaster threatening to overwhelm rescue efforts.

The death toll in the south stands at 364, but police said it could reach 1,000. Another 256 have been killed in the east, and six in the north. According to the UN, which, with other agencies, is helping with the rescue mission, 300 people are still missing in the east. "We still believe that hundreds more bodies remain to be found ... especially around the villages still submerged," said Tegaye Mununhe, chief police inspector for the southern Omo area. "Our rescue operations will continue despite the weather, and we will not stop until we have

done our job." Police said they were calling off the search for bodies in eastern Ethiopia, but continuing their search in the south.

The state-run radio warned residents in the north-eastern region of Afar to prepare for more flooding from the 745-mile long Awash river. "We are evacuating more than 7,000 people from three districts of the Awash river," said Mohammed Ahmed, head of the region's early-warning and food-security bureau. One official, Zemedkun Tekle, said the government had made the floods disaster a high priority, with a cabinet committee overseeing the action.

Rescuers said they feared a cholera outbreak, and the UN said government agencies and NGOs were vaccinating to ward off cholera.

The rains, which usually fall between June and September, were some of the heaviest seen in the country, which has many areas inaccessible by road and which frequently suffers severe drought.

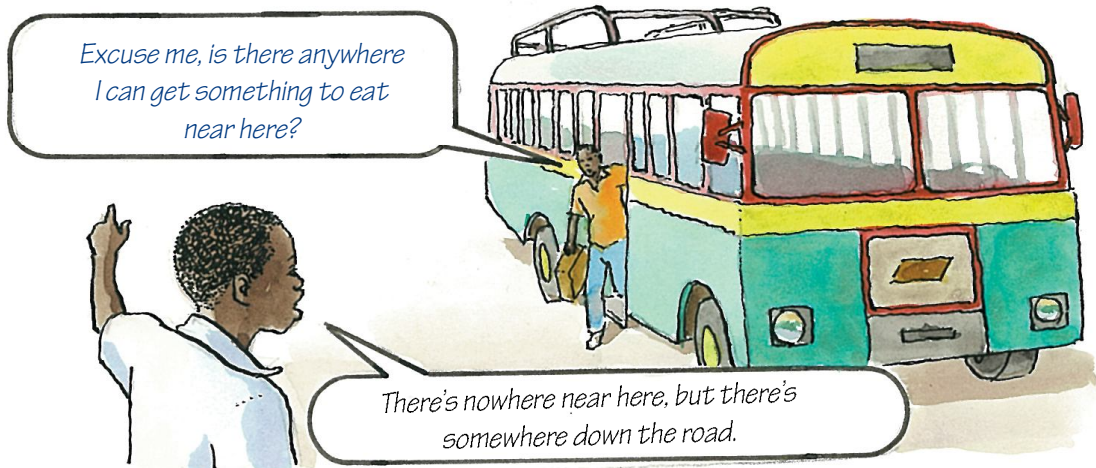
- 2** Answer the following questions.

- 1 When did the flooding take place?
- 2 What is the estimated final death toll?
- 3 In what part of the country was the worst of the flooding?
- 4 What flood warnings did the radio broadcast?
- 5 What disease could result from the flooding?

B7.3 Language focus: Revision *anywhere, something, no one, everybody, etc.*

1 Can you remember the rules for using *some, any* and *no*? Complete these sentences with one of these words, write them in your exercise book.

- 1 In _____ countries, many women don't have _____ children.
- 2 I have _____ brothers. I don't have _____ sisters either.
- 3 Do you have _____ brothers?
- 4 Would you like _____ soup?



2 Copy this table into your exercise book and complete it.

	-thing	-where	-one	-body
some		<i>somewhere</i>		
any		<i>anywhere</i>		
no		<i>nowhere</i>		
every		<i>everywhere</i>		

- The difference between *something* and *anything* is the same as between *some* and *any*.
- We generally use a singular verb after these compounds:

Examples: *Everyone panicked after the earthquake.*

The lava flowed everywhere.

Someone saw the huge wave approach the shore.

Something is always going on.

- We often use *they* as a pronoun of *someone / body*.

Example:

Someone has left their book in the classroom.

3 Complete these sentences with one of the words from table 2 and write them in your exercise book.

- 1 Please can I have _____ to drink? I'm very thirsty.
- 2 Have you seen my book? I've looked _____ but I can't find it.
- 3 You look busy. Is there _____ I can do to help?
- 4 Would you like _____ to eat?
- 5 Unfortunately, there's _____ in this class who can run fast enough to be in the school sports competition.
- 6 Are you ill? You haven't eaten _____.
- 7 _____ has eaten all the cake! There's _____ left!
- 8 'Are you going _____ for the holidays?'
'No, we aren't going _____.'
- 9 'I'm bored. I've got _____ to do.'
- 10 _____ in the class is coming to the party, so it's going to be very big.

B7.4 Language focus: Active and passive verbs

1 Choose the correct words to complete the following passage about a disaster and copy the passage into your exercise books.

The noise *is / was* terrible. We blocked our ears and *ran / run* out into the street. The house walls *are / were* collapsing into the road and many people *are / were* trapped in the ruins. Everyone panicked when they *see / saw* their houses and homes *come / came* tumbling down as if they *are / were* packs of cards. Parents *somewhere / everywhere* rushed to save their children, but many *was / were* caught by the falling masonry. Loud cries and shrieks from the wounded filled the air, adding to the noise of the buildings crashing down around us. Bodies *are / were* lying in the street and *was / were* being pulled from the rubble. Someone *see / saw* some thieves *stolen / stealing* from the ruined houses, but police and soldiers *surround / surrounded* the area and the looters *are / were* quickly arrested. Then the tremors *stop / stopped* and suddenly there *is / was* a deathly hush as bewildered people *try / tried* to make sense of the scene of devastation *leave / left* by the earthquake.

2 Now underline all the verbs in the passive tense.

B7.5 Study skills: Thinking about words

- 1** Copy the below table into your exercise book, then work in pairs to classify these words under each heading. The first has been done for you.

eat disaster volcano tornado consume giant wave
 introduction sudden fear whirlwind tsunami panic catastrophe
 preliminary text a vent in the earth's crust

Words I use	Words I know
<i>eat</i>	<i>consume</i>

Can you or your partner add any other words about natural disasters to this table?

- 2** Discuss how you made the decision to classify a word under each heading and with the help of your teacher, draw up a list on the board of factors needed to actively 'know' a word, for example *meaning, spelling, pronunciation*, etc. Can you add any further factors to this list?

**B7.6 Writing:** A guided essay

- 1** When you are writing an essay, you will find it useful to use the following seven stages or steps to help you organise your work.
- 1** Analyse – decide on the subject and the information you wish to include.
 - 2** Planning – plan the order of presenting the information.
 - 3** Research – find out all you can about the topic
 - 4** Writing the main body of the essay – use the information from steps 1-3 to write your text in a logical order.
 - 5** Conclusion – bring your arguments to a final ending or conclusion in the last paragraph.
 - 6** Introduction – write the first introductory paragraph to 'set the scene'.
 - 7** Editing your essay – read your essay to check for any mistakes in grammar, spelling, etc. Make sure you have included all you wish to say.
- 2** Using the ideas above, plan a text entitled *The world is a more dangerous place than 50 years ago*. Refer back to previous texts for useful ideas and vocabulary. Suggested paragraph topics might be:
- 1** Introduction
 - 2** Description of natural disasters now
 - 3** Description of man-made disasters occurring now
 - 4** Counter-arguments to the essay title
 - 5** Conclusion



B7.7 Writing: A formal letter

In Unit 4, **B4.5**, you wrote an informal letter to an agony aunt. Now you will learn about writing a formal letter.

There are various ways in which formal letters can be set out. The block style, which is now the fashion, makes letter writing easier and quicker for typists. You will see an example of a letter written in this style below. Look at it and notice the following:

- The *sender's address* (but not his or her name) is set out in the top right hand corner. The address is aligned vertically so that each line starts immediately below the first one.
- The *date* goes below the address. The number indicating the day does *not* have to be followed by *st, nd, etc.*
- The *addressee's name and address* are arranged at the top left, but lower than the sender's address.
- The *salutation* ("Dear ...") begins just below the addressee's address.
- The *subject* of the letter goes under the salutation, and is underlined if the letter is handwritten.
- The *text of the letter* begins after a line space.
- *Paragraphs* are separated from one another by a line space and the first line of each is not indented (i.e. shifted right).
- The *valediction* – usually *Yours faithfully* in formal letters is written after the text of the letter, and is separated from it by a line space.
- Immediately under the signature, the *name of the sender* is clearly written.
- Punctuation. The normal rules of punctuation apply.
- Formal letters are brief and to the point.

1 Read the following formal letter to *The Times* and answer the following questions.

- 1 There are two addresses at the top of the letter. Whose address is on the left and whose is on the right?
- 2 What information is given in the address on the left that is NOT given in the address on the right?
- 3 What is directly under the sender's address?
- 4 How does the Berhanu Kebede **a** start the letter **b** finish the letter?
- 5 Is the letter in formal or informal language?
- 6 How many paragraphs are there in the letter?
- 7 What information is given in each paragraph? Match the reason to the relevant paragraph.
 - a** the land-holding system in Ethiopia
 - b** the work of the Ethiopian government
 - c** Ethiopia's agricultural policy
 - d** the reason for the letter

Ethiopian Embassy,
London.
28 August, 2008.

The Editor,
The Times Newspaper,
P.O. Box 1000,
London

Dear Sir,

Regrettably, the effects of climate change have brought severe drought to parts of Ethiopia in recent months and we welcome the assistance given by the international community to help us to address hardship among our people. However, your report "Ethiopia — another famine, another avoidable disaster" (Aug 20), does not help to address these issues. Attributing the current drought to population growth and land ownership rules reflects a superficial analysis of Ethiopia's recent history, politics and the economic realities that Ethiopia currently faces.

The Ethiopian Government is working closely with partner governments, international organisations and NGOs. Together we are striving to help those people who have been exposed to drought and resulting food shortages by supplying food, medical supplies and animal fodder across our country. We are also working hard to improve the distribution of water, particularly in the Somali region.

Ethiopia has been distributing food from its national reserves. Like many countries we have suffered severely from sharp rises in global food prices. This has been exacerbated by the failure of the short rainy season this year, and our reserves have been significantly overstretched.

Your report distorts Ethiopia's agricultural policy, which has been praised for its focus on improving the livelihoods of the 85 per cent of our population who live in rural areas. It is wrong to imply that the Government is abandoning the people of the Somali region when, in fact, the federal and regional governments are working together on a ten-billion-birr (£560 million) infrastructure development project to transform the region.

The land-holding system in Ethiopia should also be viewed within the context of our economic structure. Although our system does not allow the privatisation of rural land, farmers have the right of use on the land they occupy. This includes the right to lease it and to pass it to their children.

There is much to be done in our country. We are very aware of the need to reduce our dependency on imported raw materials, to improve our low level of capacity utilisation and to limit population growth. Structural issues will take time to resolve and we have implemented a comprehensive agricultural policy package to address them. This is aimed at improving farming techniques and irrigation, delivering seeds and fertilisers and allocating agricultural advisers to each district. These measures are being implemented in a sustainable fashion and we sincerely hope that they will bring about a lasting solution to the food problem. Until that time all efforts are being made to address the shortages and the assistance of our international partners is appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Berhanu Kebede

Berhanu Kebede
Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK

2 Match the following formal phrases with the informal letter phrases.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Yours sincerely | a I thought you would like to know that ... |
| 2 Dear Madam | b Thanks for all you have done. |
| 3 I am writing to inform you ... | c I'm sorry to tell you ... |
| 4 Thank you very much for your kind attention. | d Dear Berihun, |
| 5 I regret to tell you ... | e Do you think you could ...? |
| 6 I would be grateful if you could ... | f With much love, |

3 Write a short formal letter to the Red Cross explaining the urgent need for funding and resources after a disaster in your local area.

B7.8 Study skills: Analysing formal letters

1 Read the letter on page 135 again and the following two formal letters, and copy into your exercise book any samples of language that would be useful in writing a formal letter, for example; *I would be grateful if you could ...*

Independence Secondary School
Seventh Road
Newtown
10 March 2011

D. Beckham Esq,
Los Angeles Galaxy
Los Angeles,
USA

Dear Mr Beckham,

I am writing to you on behalf of my class, 6A, to ask if you would be prepared to visit us this summer. We would really like you to come, because we have seen many of your matches on TV and think you are a fabulous player.

There are also lots of questions we'd like to ask you, such as why you became a footballer and how you keep yourself fit.

I hope you can visit us. If so, please let me know when you are available, and details of your fees. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Ujulu Omod

13 Acacia Drive,
Addis Ababa
16th November, 2011

The Managing Director,
InfoPhone,
Dire Dawa

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter to complain in the strongest terms about the poor service that I have received from your company.

We signed up to your telephone and internet service package two months ago because your advertising suggests that you are better than Telco. In addition, you promise to deal with problems quickly and efficiently, something that Telco were unable or unwilling to do.

However, in the first month of service you managed to cause me to lose two days' worth of business because of poor administration. The main problem was that you failed to provide me with the correct telephone number that you had promised when I completed the contract. This phone number was an established business line which I had been using for the last three years. Obviously this meant that my clients were unable to contact me and it cost me many hours of phone calls to resolve the matter with your support centre.

I would appreciate it if this situation could be resolved and a substantial rebate offered on my first three months' account.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully

Almaz Tesfaye

- 2** Discuss with your teacher how you would use these samples, or change them for different situations.



B7.9 Reading: A sudden storm

- 1** Read the following poem about a thunderstorm, then discuss with your partner your answers to the questions below.

The wind howls, the trees sway,
The loose housetop sheets clatter and clang,
The open window shuts with a bang,
And the sky makes night of the day.

Helter-skelter the parents run,
Pressed with a thousand minor cares,
“Hey you there! Pack the house-wares
And where on earth is my son?”



Home skip the little children:
“Where have you been you naughty boy?”
The child feels nothing but joy
For he loves the approach of the rain.

The streets clear, the houses fill,
The noise gathers as children shout
To rival the raging wind without,
And nought that can move is still.

A bright flash! A lighted plain;
Then from the once-blue heavens,
Together with a noise that deafens,
Steadily pours the rain.

Pius Oleghe (From *African Poetry for Schools* Book 1, Noel Machin, Longman 1978)

2 Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1** Music and drumming have rhythm and so does most poetry. Read the poem aloud. Can you feel the rhythm of the lines?
- 2** Pick out the words that rhyme, or nearly rhyme. What is the rhyming pattern?
- 3** Which of these feelings does the writer try to convey?
 - a** quietness
 - b** chaos
 - c** excitement
 - d** pleasure
 - e** fear
- 4** The poet uses words to help us see and hear things in our minds as we read. Here are some examples:
The wind *howls*.
The trees *sway*.
The children *skip* home.
 - a** Match the verbs the poet has used with these more commonly used verbs:
move go blow
 - b** Find some other examples that help us hear the noise of the storm and the things it causes.
- 5** Do the children react to the storm in the same way as the adults? Find some words in the poem to support your answer.
- 6** How do you react to this poem? What do you feel about it?

B7.10 Study skills: A vocabulary target

Set a vocabulary target for the next unit, for example, make a vocabulary network for the unit topic; do some extensive reading and record new words; find collocations for words you have already recorded for this grade or for new words in the next Unit, etc.

B7.11 Fun with words: Word square

Make as many words as you can from the letter in the square. Each word must contain the letter in the middle. Also try to make one word using all nine letters. Write your words in your exercise book.

N	O	I
D	A	B
S	G	R

Assessment**1** Reading

Your teacher will give you a newspaper article. Read it and say how it relates to something you have seen or read about.

2 Writing

Revise the layout of a formal letter, then your teacher will ask you to write a short formal letter to someone.