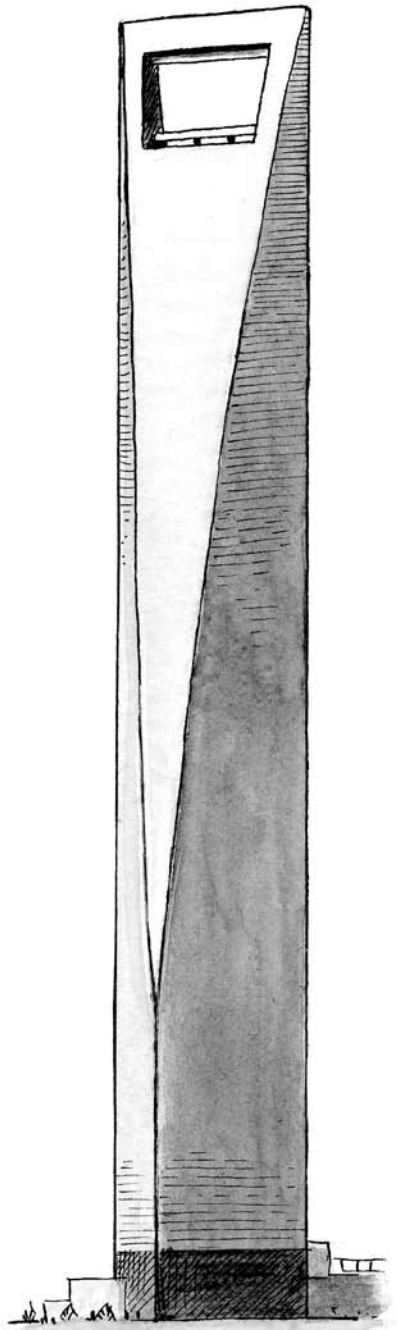**NOVA**

Learning from Disasters

After a disaster, an investigative team is formed to determine what happened. In this activity, you will be researching disasters through the eyes of an investigator and arguing for the adoption of local, regional, or national safety features or building codes.

Procedure

1 Research the following historic disasters that resulted in recommended or adopted changes in safety features or building codes.
   • Cocoanut Grove Nightclub Fire
   • Beverly Hills Supper Club Fire
   • Hurricane Andrew
   • World Trade Center Attack
   • The Station Nightclub Fire
   • Hurricane Katrina

2 Write a short description of each disaster, highlighting key statistics of where and when it occurred, why it occurred, and how many people were injured or died. If possible, your research should also note:
   • the factors that contributed to any injuries or deaths.
   • a time line of disaster events.
   • what, if any, advance warning there was and how people reacted to the warnings.
   • any changes in safety features or building codes suggested following the disaster.
   • why these suggested changes might prevent this level of loss in a similar disaster.

3 For each disaster, brainstorm any other safety features or building codes you would recommend. Include your reasoning for any proposed changes.

4 When you have finished gathering information, select two safety feature or building code changes that you will recommend for adoption for a particular building or types of buildings. Fill out the "Proposed Changes" handout with your choices and why they should be adopted.

5 Your team will present its recommendations to the class, which will evaluate the proposed changes based on a set of criteria. You will be asked to do the same for your classmates. Then the class will vote to accept or reject your proposals.

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