

Thinking Things Through

The deadliest air disaster in history occurred in 1977 at a small airport named Los Rodeos on the island of Tenerife in the Canary Islands. If the crash had a single, clear cause, it might be easy to prevent a future similar disaster. The program makes the point that many events led to the collision at Los Rodeos airport. In this activity, your team will review several causes of the crash, analyze what might have been done differently, and suggest strategies to prevent similar events from happening in the future.

Procedure

- 1 Review the notes you took while watching the program and add to the “Events Chart” any other events that you think may have contributed to the crash. After the list has been completed, read each event and determine whether it was an action or condition based on the following definitions.

action: A decision made or step taken that contributed to the crash and that could have been changed at the time.

condition: A feature of the situation that may have played a role in the crash but could not have been changed at the time.

- 2 After your team has categorized each event, work together to list the results of each event you categorized as an “action” event in your chart. Then answer the questions to the right.

Questions

Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

- 1 Where in the chain of events could decisions have been made that could have altered the outcome? What were some actions that could have been taken that were not?
- 2 Choose three events that your team believes contributed most to the crash. Provide reasons for your choices.

