

Enrich

Storms

A hurricane today that is the same strength as a hurricane in 1910 will cause much more damage than the earlier hurricane. Read the passage below and look at the tables that follow it. Then use a separate sheet of paper to answer the questions below the tables.

Population Growth and Damage From Hurricanes

The East Coast of the United States has attracted millions of new residents and vacationers over the past several decades. There are now more than 50 million people who live year-round on shorelines from Texas to Maine, especially in the Sunbelt from Texas through North Carolina. The East Coast is also in the path of many hurricanes, and the increase in population has led not only to more costly damage when hurricanes strike, as shown in the table below, but also to problems evacuating people. The development of new roads along the shoreline has not kept pace with population growth, making evacuation difficult. In addition, many people do not take hurricane warnings seriously enough and may delay leaving in an evacuation.

Decade	Damage From Hurricanes (Billions in 2000 Dollars)
1901–1910	0.5
1911–1920	3.5
1921–1930	2.2
1931–1940	6.1
1941–1950	5.7
1951–1960	15.6
1961–1970	24.9
1971–1980	18.5
1981–1990	21.5
1991–2000	56.6

Year	Coastal County Population From Texas to Maine (Millions)
1910	12.2
1920	14.0
1930	17.6
1940	19.3
1950	24.0
1960	30.0
1970	35.5
1980	38.9
1990	43.8
2000	47.6

1. Describe how the coastal population from Texas to Maine has changed since 1910.
2. How did the amount of damage caused by hurricanes change during the same period?
3. Why has an increase in shoreline population led to an increase in the amount of damage caused by hurricanes?
4. Why do you think that the amount of damage caused by hurricanes dropped in the 1970s and 1980s despite a steady increase in population during those decades?