

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Flood!

AME Day 5

In 1889, a big rainfall, a private club, a lake, and a weak dam caused a terrible flood. The flood killed thousands of people. The western Pennsylvania town of Johnstown was changed forever.

The trouble started when rich investors from nearby Pittsburgh bought Lake Conemaugh. They turned the land into a private club. The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club lowered the dam to put a road on top of it. This and other changes to the dam weakened it. It set the stage for a failure of the dam.



On May 28, a storm moved across the Midwest and into western Pennsylvania. It was a huge storm that dumped a record amount of rain on the area around Johnstown. Some club members saw that the lake was flowing over the dam. They also saw that the dam was going to fail. A few started to work to keep the dam from failing. They weren't able to save it.

The dam collapsed and released all the water in Lake Conemaugh - all 4.8 billion gallons and twenty million tons of water. The entire lake drained in forty minutes!

Below the dam were the towns of South Fork, Mineral Point, East Conemaugh, and Johnstown. The flood rushed down the Little Conemaugh River, picking up all kinds of debris like broken trees and dirt. Some who saw the rushing flood didn't see water. They just saw something that looked like a huge rolling hill of dirt and trees.

The flood destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses. Many people died while outside. Some died while in their homes. Others even died inside railroad cars that were swept away in the flood. In all, two thousand, two hundred people died in the flood. It destroyed one thousand, six hundred homes and caused seventeen million dollars in damage. At the time, it was the worst disaster in American history.

News of the flood spread fast and help poured in from all over the country and the world. A new organization was quick on the scene. This group was the American Red Cross, led by its founder, Clara Barton. Barton stayed in Johnstown for five months.

Cleanup from the flood lasted for years. Many of the victims were never identified. No one was ever held responsible for the dam's failure. Today, a bridge that was damaged by the flood still stands in Johnstown. Marks from the rising water on the Johnstown town hall show the level of the great flood of 1889.

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**Questions**

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. : What is the main idea of paragraph 7?
- A. Clara Barton stayed in Johnstown for five months.
  - B. The flood of 1889 was a great disaster for Johnstown.
  - C. Clara Barton was the founder of the American Red Cross.
  - D. Help came from many different places after the Johnstown Flood.
2. List two things that helped cause the Johnstown flood.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. In what year did the flood described in the article occur?
- A. 2060
  - B. 1889
  - C. 1878
  - D. 1989
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. How many people died in the flood?
- A. 2,500
  - B. 2,612
  - C. 2,002
  - D. 2,200
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What newly formed group was quick to provide help after the flood?
- A. Civilian Conservation Corps
  - B. American Red Cross
  - C. UNESCO
  - D. Peace Corps
6. What is the estimated weight of the water that flowed out of Lake Conemaugh?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club was held responsible for the flood.
- A. false
  - B. true
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. In what state is Johnstown located?
- A. New York
  - B. Ohio
  - C. Pennsylvania
  - D. Oregon