Directions: As you come across words in bold in “America’s Deadliest Disaster,” ask yourself if you know them or if you can figure them out from context. Check their meanings here. Then complete the activity on the following page.

1. absurd: “Just a few years before, one respected weather forecaster had written that the idea of a hurricane striking Galveston was ‘absurd.’” (p. 8)
   Meaning: ridiculous

2. churning: “Outside, the wild, churning ocean was like a furious beast devouring his neighborhood.” (p. 4)
   Meaning: swirling or moving violently

3. debris: “In minutes, the entire city was transformed into a raging sea, filled with debris.” (p. 8)
   Meaning: pieces of something that has been destroyed

4. devouring: “Outside, the wild, churning ocean was like a furious beast devouring his neighborhood.” (p. 4)
   Meaning: eating in a fast and hungry way

5. immigrants: “Arriving ships were crowded with immigrants—people coming to America to start new lives.” (p. 6)
   Meaning: people moving to a new country

6. predictions: “Not surprisingly, most of their predictions were wrong.” (p. 7)
   Meaning: statements about what you think is likely to happen in the future

7. prone: “True, this glittering city was prone to flooding.” (p. 6)
   Meaning: especially at risk for or likely to be affected by

8. reclaim: “But it would never reclaim its place as the richest and most important city in Texas.” (p. 9)
   Meaning: get back

9. surge: “But the most devastating part of a hurricane is the ‘storm surge.’” (p. 7)
   Meaning: a sudden large and powerful movement, often created by water

10. transforming: “New inventions and fresh ideas were transforming lives all across the country, especially in cities like Galveston.” (p. 5)
    Meaning: changing

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Directions: Complete each sentence below, being sure it makes sense.

1. Our parents wouldn’t let us jump into the churning ocean water because ________________________________________________________.

2. Even though the basketball team lost the tournament this year, next year they hope to reclaim ________________________________________________________.

3. Predictions from weather forecasters help people ________________________________________________________.

4. The caterpillar hatched from its egg and began devouring ________________________________________________________.

5. I thought it was absurd that ________________________________________________________.

6. The family was transforming their backyard by ________________________________________________________.

7. It is especially important to wear sunscreen if you are prone to ________________________________________________________.

8. The immigrants were thankful that ________________________________________________________.

9. The surge of water from the storm caused ________________________________________________________.

10. After the building was torn down, construction workers cleaned up debris, like ________________________________________________________.