

Quiz: RI.8.7

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

“New York, One Month After Sandy”

Michael Byrne (FEMA employee)

- 1 I am a native New Yorker.
- 2 I was born in New York City. I grew up in the city’s Public Housing developments in East Harlem and my Mom and Dad, brothers and sisters still live here. I worked for the New York Fire Department for 20 years, eventually serving as a Captain. I worked at the New York Office of Emergency Management and then I joined FEMA.
- 3 I’m a proud New Yorker and today, I’m honored to be part of the federal team that is working hard to assist my home city and state.
- 4 Even before the storm, FEMA was preparing. We prepositioned food, water and blankets at two incident support bases in New York. FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT), trained to quickly coordinate federal resources to support the state were on the ground days before landfall. We also started calling in the cavalry, everyone from the U.S. Coast Guard, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We even had the Marines land on the beach in the Rockaways.
- 5 In the response phase of a disaster like this, it is critical that we focus on what I like to call the “four Ps”—“People, Power, Pumping and Pick-it-up.”
- 6 People always come first. The very first thing we did was get life-saving commodities out to the people. Within 24 hours we supplied more than a million liters of water and more than a million shelf ready meals to the New York National Guard and Voluntary Agencies throughout the city—who quickly distributed them to the New Yorkers in need. The third day after the storm, we were set up in all the affected areas.
- 7 New York is an amazing place, made up of different people from all over the world. Every neighborhood is distinctly unique, with different traditions, dialects and sense of community. But most of all, New York is made up of neighborhoods.
- 8 For example, you look on a map and see the Rockaways. But there are really four different Rockaways. You have Far Rock, Rockaway Beach, Belle Harbor and Breezy Point. Each neighborhood is different.
- 9 We set up Disaster Recovery Centers, where people can meet and talk about assistance face-to-face. I was out at the center in Rockaway Beach and there were tons of people waiting to be seen. Everyone had a number and I talked to a guy that had number 245. The center was on number 150. I told him we had heated buses that would take people to the Breezy Point center, but he wanted to stay with his neighbors and wait. That’s New York.
- 10 Today, we have 34 centers throughout damaged areas, covering the neighborhoods that have had the most damage. Over 56,000 New Yorkers have visited these centers. And we plan to open more.

