



8 Choose two questions you wrote in exercise 7 and research the answers. You could use the Internet or an encyclopedia. Make them into a poster for your classroom wall.



plane flying at a mere 15 kilometres above. What can be seen when orbiting the Earth (from about 200 kilometres up) are the lights of the world's large metropolitan areas.

you know your world?

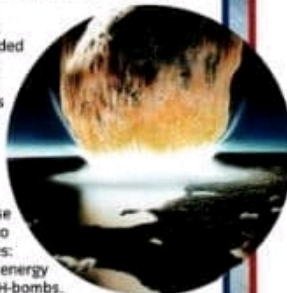
You ask ... we answer!

4 What is the most terrible natural disaster to have hit the Earth?

A Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and hurricanes are responsible for the deaths of thousands of people every year.

One of the most violent earthquakes ever recorded was in Ecuador in 1906. It was the equivalent of 100 H-bombs, but it was nothing compared to a volcanic eruption in Tambora, Indonesia in 1815. This was the equivalent of 10,000 H-bombs. But, even these are nothing compared to many tropical hurricanes: they regularly have the energy of an amazing 100,000 H-bombs.

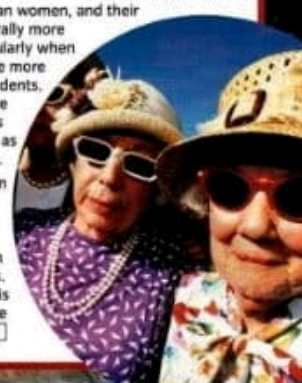
However, there is one natural disaster that beats all of these by a very long way – a meteor that hit the Earth 65 million years ago and caused an explosion the equivalent of 10 million H-bombs.



6 Why do women live longer than men?

A Women generally live about six years longer than men. Evidence suggests that boys are the weaker sex at birth, which means that more die in infancy. Men also have a greater risk of heart disease than women, and they have heart attacks earlier in life. Men smoke and drink more than women, and their behaviour is generally more aggressive, particularly when driving, so they are more likely to die in accidents. Also, men are more often in dangerous occupations, such as construction work.

Historically, women died in childbirth and men in wars. So nuns and philosophers often lived to great ages. Now childbearing is less risky and there are fewer wars.



5 Why isn't there a row 13 on aeroplanes?

A In many countries, the number 13 is considered to be very unlucky. In France, there is never a house with the number 13. In the United States, modern high-rise buildings label the floor that follows 12 as 14.

Where did this fear of a number come from? The idea goes back at least to Norse mythology in ancient times. There was a banquet with 12 gods. Loki, the spirit of evil, decided to join without being invited. In the fight that followed, Balder, the favourite of the gods, was killed.

In Christianity, this theme was repeated at the Last Supper. Jesus Christ and his apostles numbered 13 people at the table.



7 Was Uncle Sam a real person?

A Yes, he was! This symbol of the United States with a long white beard, wearing striped trousers and top hat, was a meat packer from New York state.

Uncle Sam was Samuel Wilson, born in Arlington, Massachusetts in 1766. At the age of eight, he was a drummer boy in the American Revolution. Later in life he moved to New York and opened a meat-packing company. He was a good and caring employer and became affectionately known as Uncle Sam.

Sam Wilson sold meat to the army, and he wrote the letters US on the crates. This meant 'United States', but this abbreviation was not yet common. One day a company worker was asked what the letters US stood for. He wasn't sure, and wrongly said that perhaps the letters stood for his employer, Uncle Sam. Nevertheless, the mistake continued. Soon soldiers started referring to all military goods as coming from Uncle Sam. They even saw themselves as Uncle Sam's men.



LISTENING AND SPEAKING

The forgetful generation

- 1 TILB** Listen to the introduction to a radio programme called *What's Your Problem?* and answer the questions.
 - What problem are they talking about?

VOCABULARY AND IDIOMS

What can your body do?

- 1** As a class, write all the parts of the body that you know on the board.
- 2** Work with a partner. Which parts of the