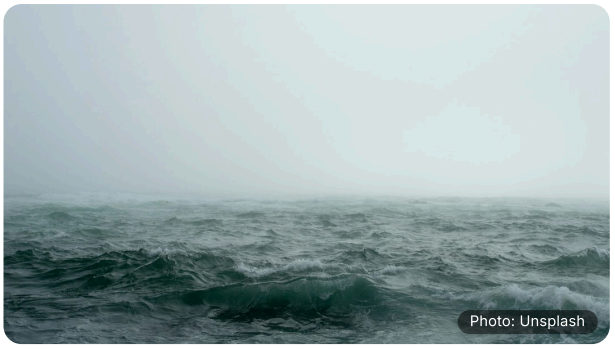
Hurricane Polo nears Baja California Sur

LEVEL A2/B1


Photo: Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. What kinds of storms happen in your country?
2. How do people prepare for bad weather?
3. What would you pack for an emergency?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

brace
to prepare yourself for something difficult or unpleasant

landfall
the time a storm first reaches land from the sea

mudslide
a sudden flow of wet earth down a hill after heavy rain

surge
a sudden strong rise; in storms, a high wave of sea water

evacuate
to leave a place because it is not safe

shelter
a safe place to stay during danger or bad weather

meteorologist
a weather scientist who studies and forecasts the weather

deploy
to send people or equipment to a place for a task

III. READING

People on Mexico's northern Pacific coast are bracing for Hurricane Polo. It is a category-three storm with winds near 115 mph (185 km/h). Forecasters expect landfall late Monday or early Tuesday in Baja California Sur, home to the tourist area of Los Cabos.

The US National Hurricane Center warned of heavy rain that could cause life-threatening flooding and mudslides. It also warned of a storm surge with large, destructive waves. In Cabo San Lucas, access to beaches was restricted and some restaurants closed. The state government kept schools closed on Monday.

Governor Víctor Manuel Castro Cosío said shelters were open if people need to evacuate. Federal authorities deployed thousands of navy and army members and machinery. Meteorologists say Polo is moving slowly over very warm waters, fuelled by the El Niño climate phenomenon. On Sunday, residents bought water and food, and lifeguards raised red flags to alert holidaymakers.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News**: *"Mexico's Pacific coast braces for Hurricane Polo". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where is Hurricane Polo expected to make landfall?
2. How strong are Polo's maximum winds in the report?
3. What dangers did the National Hurricane Center warn about?
4. What actions were taken in Cabo San Lucas before the storm?
5. What did federal authorities do to prepare?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever experienced a severe storm? What did you do?
2. What would you buy to prepare for a hurricane? Why?
3. Should beaches close before a big storm? Why or why not?
4. How can local leaders help tourists during extreme weather?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Subject & object questions

Use a subject question to ask who does something (Who + verb ...). Use an object question to ask who receives the action (Who + did + subject + verb ...).

"Who **closed the restaurants?** *"*
"Who **did people ask** *for help?"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

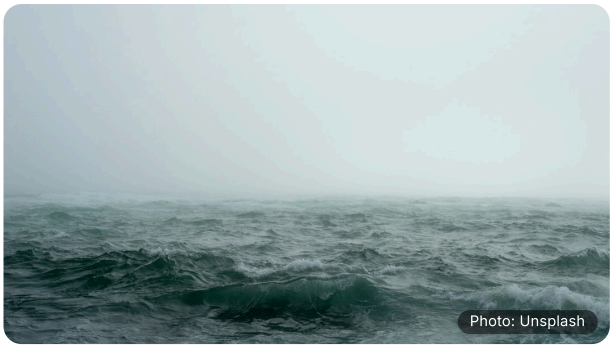
Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Ahead of Polo, (who warned / who did warn) of heavy rain? _____
2. On Sunday, (who lifeguards alerted / who did lifeguards alert)? _____
3. On Monday, (who did keep / who kept) the schools closed? _____
4. (Who did authorities deploy / Who authorities deployed)? _____
5. Before landfall, (who did say / who said) shelters were open? _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Unsplash

I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 10–12 minutes reading, 10 minutes comprehension, 8–10 minutes discussion (grammar can share time with reading/comprehension).
- Pre-teach or drill names and terms: Baja California Sur, Los Cabos, Cabo San Lucas, Hurricane Polo, National Hurricane Center, El Niño. Use a map to locate the area.
- Run the reading as a two-step task: skim for who/where/when, then scan for numbers and actions. The topic involves danger and possible injury, so start the discussion in pairs and let students speak about the news rather than personal experiences if they prefer.
- Differentiation: stronger students summarise the four main official actions; others match vocabulary to simple picture prompts (wave, shelter, rain, flag).

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. If few students have storm experience, allow them to answer about a news story instead.
2. List 6–8 items on the board first; ask pairs to choose and justify three priorities.
3. Take a quick show of hands, then pair students with different views to give reasons.
4. Prompt ideas: clear signs in several languages, transport advice, and where shelters are.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Role-play: In pairs, act out a 90-second radio update: one meteorologist, one presenter, about Hurricane Polo.

Writing: Write a 70-word safety notice for hotel guests in Cabo San Lucas before landfall.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

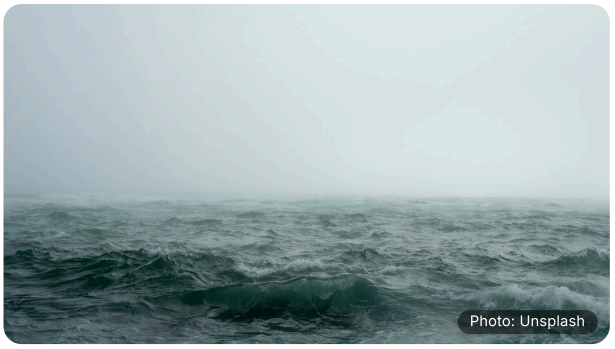
Grammar exercise: Subject & object questions

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Unsplash

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where is Hurricane Polo expected to make landfall?
   In Baja California Sur, in north-west Mexico.
2. How strong are Polo's maximum winds in the report?
   Near 115 mph (185 km/h).
3. What dangers did the National Hurricane Center warn about?
   Life-threatening flooding and mudslides, and a storm surge with large waves.
4. What actions were taken in Cabo San Lucas before the storm?
   Beach access was restricted and some restaurants closed.
5. What did federal authorities do to prepare?
   They deployed thousands of navy and army members and machinery.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Ahead of Polo, (who warned / who did warn) of heavy rain? **who warned**
2. On Sunday, (who lifeguards alerted / who did lifeguards alert)? **who did lifeguards alert**
3. On Monday, (who did keep / who kept) the schools closed? **who kept**
4. (Who did authorities deploy / Who authorities deployed)? **Who did authorities deploy**
5. Before landfall, (who did say / who said) shelters were open? **who said**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use a subject question to ask who does something (Who + verb ...). Use an object question to ask who receives the action (Who + did + subject + verb ...). (Examples constructed.)

"Who **closed the restaurants?** *"*
"Who **did people ask** *for help?"*