One of the strongest tropical storms or cyclones ever recorded hit the Philippines in 2013. Large areas of the country were devastated. It was the deadliest typhoon recorded in the Philippines in modern history. The death toll was at least 6,300 people and bodies were still being found three months later.

The following factors may have been responsible for the high death toll:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Causes of the high death toll?** | |
| A lack of electricity | Low storm surge |
| A lack of nearby higher land | Low wind speed |
| Cliffs on coastline | Many coastal fishing villages |
| Difficult access to remote communities | No mobile phone signal |
| Funnel shaped bays | No transport to move inland |
| High population density | Poor communications |
| High storm surge | Roads blocked with debris |
| High wind speeds | Short term aid available |
| Light weight building materials | Storm path was not as predicted |
| Long term aid available | Strong economy |
| Low lying land | Sturdy building materials |
| Low population density | Warning of the tropical storm |

**Student activities**

1. Identify the factors that will have contributed to a high death toll.
2. Which single factor do you think caused the most deaths?
3. List two other factors that were also important in explaining the high death toll.