

GEOGRAPHY · GRADES 4–5

Natural Disasters

When Earth makes the news

Six natural disasters

Disaster	Cause	Where most common	How measured
Earthquake	Tectonic plates moving	Ring of Fire (Pacific)	Richter / moment magnitude
Volcano	Magma escaping	Plate boundaries	VEI (Volcanic Explosivity Index)
Tsunami	Underwater earthquake	Coastal Pacific & Indian	Wave height (meters)
Hurricane / Typhoon	Tropical low-pressure system	Tropical oceans	Saffir-Simpson (Cat 1–5)
Tornado	Severe thunderstorm rotation	US 'Tornado Alley'	Enhanced Fujita scale (EF0–EF5)
Wildfire	Lightning, drought, human spark	Hot, dry forested regions	Acres burned, severity

Staying safe

In disaster zones, schools and families have plans: where to go, what to do, who to call. If you live in a disaster zone, ask a grown-up about your plan. If you don't, you can still help by knowing how disaster relief works — donations, organisations like the Red Cross, and the importance of supporting those affected.

