

## 4

# When the Earth Shakes!



Have you ever felt the ground shake beneath your feet? That's an earthquake! An earthquake is like a giant rumble that happens when the Earth's crust, which is the outer layer of our planet, moves. This crust is made up of big pieces called tectonic plates. Sometimes, these plates bump into each other or move apart, and when they do, they can cause the ground to shake.

## How Do Earthquakes Happen?

Imagine you're holding a rug on the floor and you suddenly pull it from one side. The rug will wrinkle and bunch up. That's similar to what happens with tectonic plates. When they move, they can get stuck because of friction. But the Earth's crust is always moving, so pressure builds up. When the pressure gets too much, it's released, and that's when we feel an earthquake.

## The Impact of Earthquakes

Earthquakes can be scary because they can happen without warning. They can make buildings fall down, roads crack open, and even cause landslides. But not all earthquakes are strong enough to cause damage. Scientists use something called the Richter scale to measure how strong an earthquake is. The higher the number on the Richter scale, the stronger the earthquake. After an earthquake, people need to be careful because there might be aftershocks, which are smaller earthquakes that happen after the main one. It's important to have a plan in place for what to do if an earthquake happens.

## Staying Safe During an Earthquake

If you're inside when an earthquake starts, remember to Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Drop to your hands and knees, cover your head and neck with your arms, and hold on to something sturdy until the shaking stops. If you're outside, move away from buildings and trees and find an open space.

Earthquakes remind us that our planet is always changing. By learning about them and how to stay safe, we can be better prepared for when they happen.

1. Read the passage and underline any word or sentence you struggled with.
2. Answer the questions on the following page.

4

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Answer according to the reading passage:

- 1. What causes an earthquake?**
  - a. thunder and lightning
  - b. tectonic plates moving
  - c. volcanoes
  
- 2. What is the outer layer of our planet called?**
  - a. mantle
  - b. core
  - c. crust
  
- 3. What should you do if you're inside during an earthquake?**
  - a. drop, cover and hold on
  - b. run outside immediately
  - c. hide under something
  
- 4. What are smaller earthquakes that happen after the main one called?**
  - a. tremors
  - b. aftershocks
  - c. shivers
  
- 5. What should you do if you're outside during an earthquake?**
  - a. stay under a tree
  - b. move away from buildings and find an open space
  - c. keep moving

# 4

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## Open Response Questions

### Open Response Questions for Thinking Skills:

1. Inferring
  2. Making Connections
  3. Summarizing
  4. Visualizing
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1. Explain what could happen during an earthquake where you live.
  2. Describe what your personal plan would be if an earthquake hit.
  3. What is the main idea of this reading passage?
  4. Describe what kind of damage an earthquake can do.
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- How do aftershocks differ from the main earthquake and why are they significant?
  - How can communities like yours prepare for earthquakes, and what challenges might they face?
  - Write about the significance of setting personal goals and working towards them.
  - In the reading passage, it states: “Earthquakes remind us that our planet is always changing.” Describe what is meant by this statement.