

Introduction

This term, we will be learning about earthquakes, typhoons, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions which inflict devastating suffering on communities world wide. Earthquakes are the deadliest of all natural disasters. Most deaths are caused by collapsing buildings or fires.

Several million earthquakes occur in the world each year. However, many of these are undetected because they occur in remote areas or are very weak. On average, there are 18 major earthquakes and one great earthquake each year.

Flooding is the world's most expensive type of natural disaster. The cost of global flood damage is hundreds of billions of euros. The Pakistan floods of July 2010 alone caused more than €7 billion euros of damage. Floods can occur in coastal areas or close to rivers. When huge sheets of water cover low-lying areas, they can cause immense damage to property and threaten lives.

There are about 1,500 active volcanoes, with 50 or so erupting each year. Most of these volcanoes are found around the Pacific Ocean – a belt known as the Pacific "Ring of Fire". Europe has its own volcanoes, such as Etna and Vesuvius, that have erupted many times in history.

A tsunami (pronounced "soo-nahm'ee") is a series of waves generated by an undersea disturbance such as an earthquake. From the area of the disturbance, the waves will travel outward in all directions, much like the ripples caused by throwing a rock into a pond. The time between wave crests may be from 5 to 90 minutes, and the wave speed in the open ocean will average 450 miles per hour.

Learning Overview

As readers and writers the children will use Christina Balit's *Escape from Pompeii*. They will create their own diary entries based on an eruption and produce non-chronological reports.

Taking the theme of natural disasters further, the children will learn about the human and physical geography of other natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding and tsunamis. After researching the location and causes of volcanoes they will create an informative leaflet. Using their geographical mapping skills, the children will create maps of an island prone to natural disasters that include keys. They will learn how to locate features using six figure grid references and navigate a trail around their island using eight points of the compass.

In Science, the children will look at evolution and how animals are adapted to the habitat they live. They will also have the opportunity to make their own volcanoes. As artists the children create images of landscapes using a variety of media.

In RE the children will be discovering Hinduism. In PE the children will be developing their fitness and their skills in team games and badminton. They will explore the theme of natural disasters through music too.

The class book the children will be reading is *Running Wild* by Michael Morpurgo.

How you can support your child at home.

Provide a quiet space for homework activities. Have a digital sunset (a time when all digital equipment is not used) Support your child with home based learning. Tune in to Newsround and read newspaper reports linked to natural disasters.