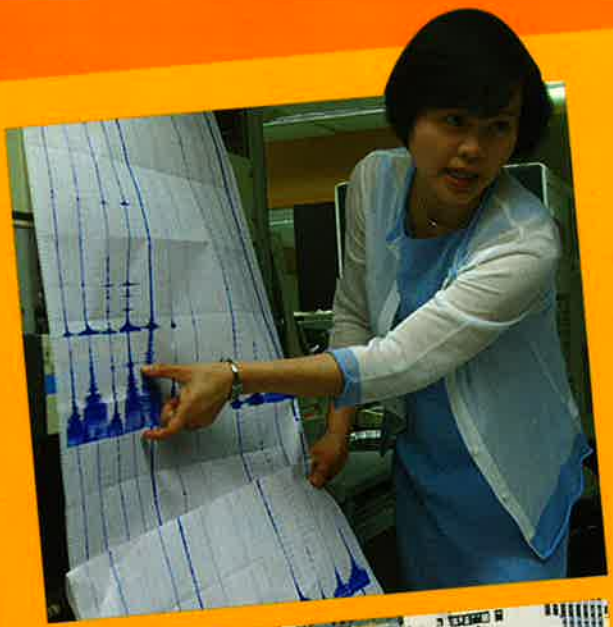
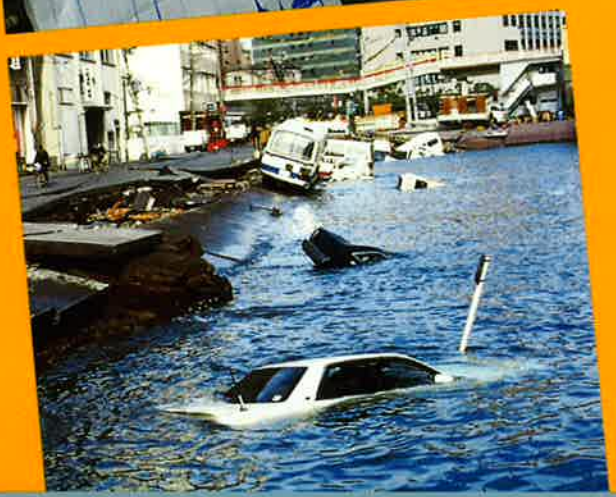
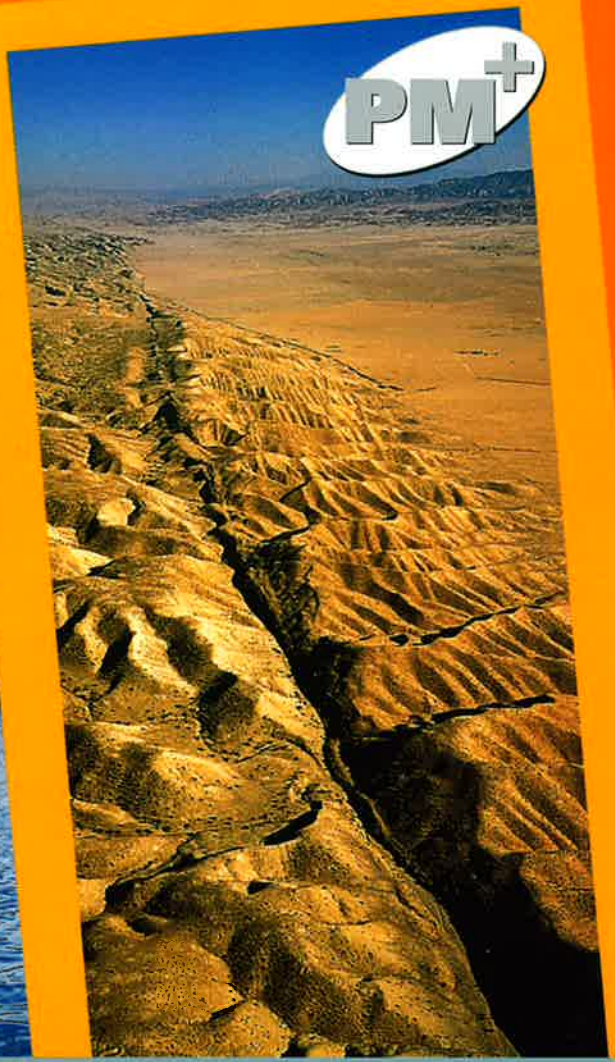






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Earthquakes and Tsunamis

by Mary Draper

For teachers' inspection ONLY

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Introduction

An earthquake makes the ground shake and crack. It starts a long way under the surface of the Earth.

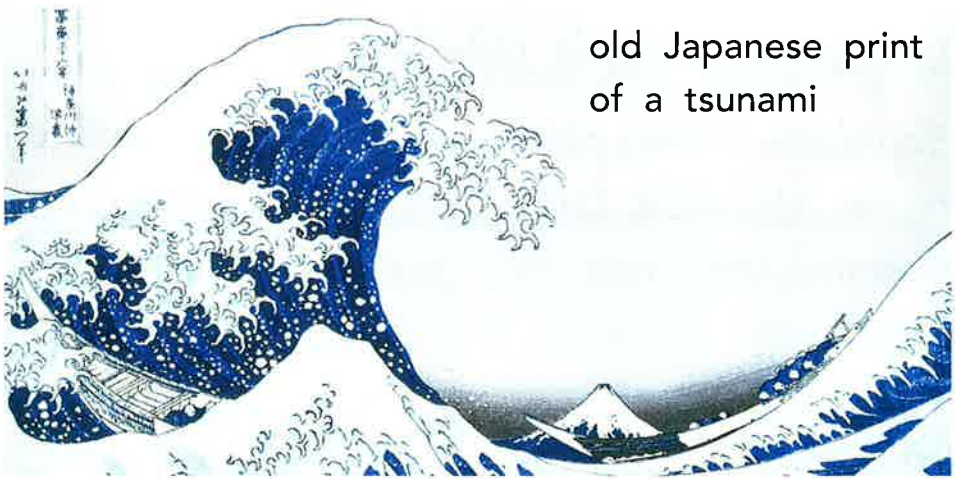


An earthquake can be very dangerous. People are sometimes hurt or killed. They can lose their homes, and be left with no food or water.

People cannot stop an earthquake from happening, but scientists are learning about where and when an earthquake might happen.

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A tsunami is a very large and powerful wave. When an earthquake happens under the ocean, it can make a tsunami.



old Japanese print of a tsunami

A tsunami can be very high by the time it hits the land, and people often have no warning.



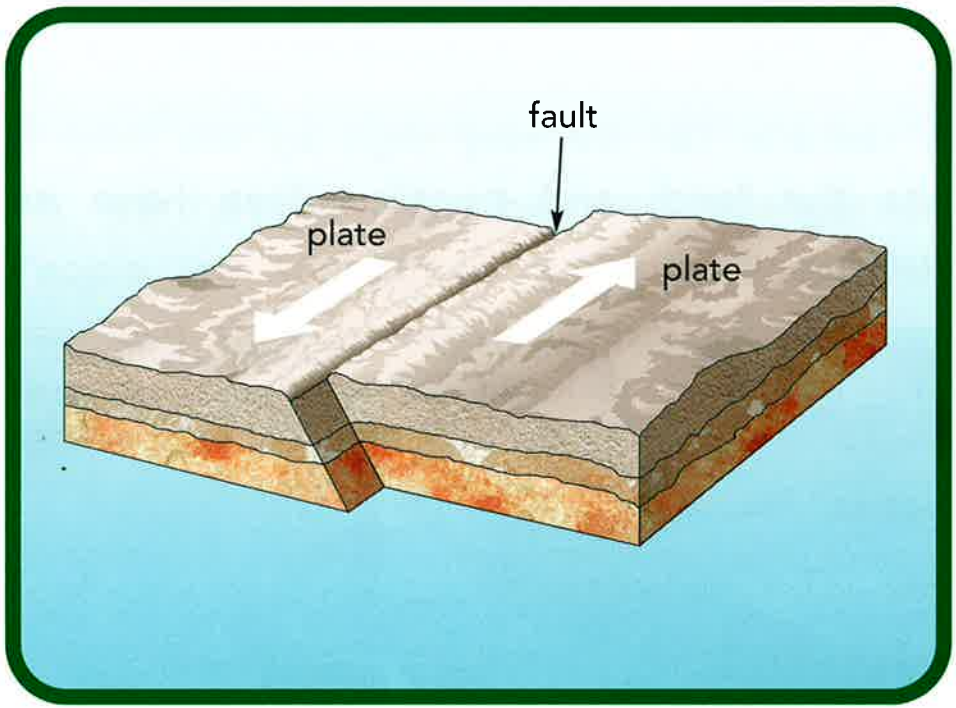
tsunami damage

What is an earthquake?

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The plates in the Earth's crust are moving very slowly all the time. The place where two plates meet is called a fault.

Sometimes the plates get stuck when they move along a fault. The two plates keep pushing until one side breaks, then there is a jerk and a shake. This is an earthquake.

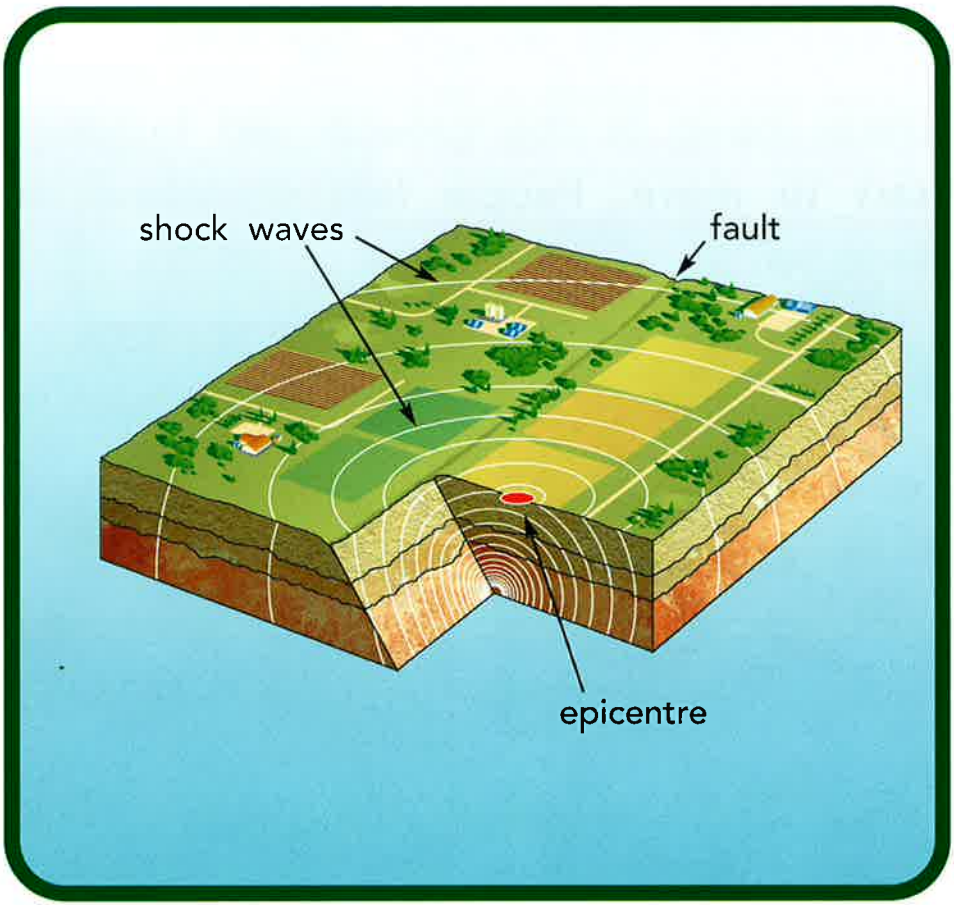


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Shock waves

The place where the earthquake reaches the surface of the Earth is called the epicentre.

Shock waves fan out from the epicentre in all directions and make the ground shake.



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When an earthquake happens

An earthquake starts with a rumbling sound, and people may feel the ground shaking slightly. These are the first shock waves.

Animals and birds become frightened.

Cracks open in the ground and buildings start to move. People find it difficult to stand up.



