

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Earthquakes

Earthquakes happen when the plates that make up the surface of the Earth move apart or bump into each other or slide under each other. This tears apart the surface of the Earth or crunches it up. Usually this just means a little shaking for a few seconds and nothing serious happens.

Several times a year, though, somewhere in the world there is enough movement to really shake the earth a lot. When this happens, the earthquake is really strong and it can knock down buildings. The strongest earthquakes can break trees in half.

When we want to know how strong an earthquake is, we use The Richter Scale. If the earthquake is rated 1, you can hardly feel it. These are called tremors and only a few people will feel a level 1 earthquake. A level 2 earthquake is 10 times as strong as a level 1 earthquake. Almost everyone will feel a level 5 earthquake and some dishes and windows will break. If an earthquake becomes a level 6, heavy furniture will move around and many people will feel frightened. A level 8 earthquake will cause buildings to fall down.

Since most of the earth is covered with water, earthquakes often happen in the ocean. Usually this just shakes the water and people don't notice. Sometimes the water pulls all together into a huge wave called a tidal wave or a tsunami.

### Circle true or false below

- |  |      |       |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. Earthquakes happen when the plates move or bump into each other.    | True | False |
| 2. There is an earthquake somewhere in the world several times a year. | True | False |
| 3. The strongest earthquakes will just shake a little.                 | True | False |
| 4. Earthquakes are measured by the Earthquake Scale.                   | True | False |
| 5. If buildings are falling down, it must be a level 5 earthquake.     | True | False |
| 6. There is more land than water on earth.                             | True | False |
| 7. It's impossible for earthquakes to happen in the ocean.             | True | False |
| 8. An earthquake under the ocean causes a tsunami.                     | True | False |

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