

Finn's Geography Guide: What is an Earthquake?

Learning objective: To understand the causes and effects of earthquakes.

Read the text carefully. Use the word bank to help you understand the tricky words. Answer the questions in the boxes provided.

Hello! I am Finn the dolphin. I spend my time exploring the deep blue oceans, but today I am learning about the land. Have you ever felt the ground shake? This is called an earthquake. The Earth is not one solid piece. Think of it like a giant jigsaw puzzle. These pieces are called tectonic plates. They are always moving very slowly. Sometimes, the edges of these plates get stuck. They push and push against each other. Suddenly, they snap free! This movement creates strong vibrations that travel through the ground. These vibrations make the Earth shake. We call this an earthquake. Scientists use special machines to measure these shakes. Some earthquakes are very small and you might not even feel them. Others can be very strong. They can change the shape of the land and move buildings. If you are ever in an earthquake, remember to drop, cover, and hold on to stay safe. Geography is amazing, whether it is under the sea or on the solid ground!

Word bank: Tectonic plates: Giant puzzle pieces that make up the Earth's surface. · Vibrations: Shaking movements. · Fault line: A crack in the ground where plates meet. · Epicentre: The spot on the surface directly above where the quake begins.

1. What does Finn call the pieces of the Earth that fit together like a puzzle? (2 marks)

2. What happens when the tectonic plates get stuck and then snap free? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think scientists use machines to measure earthquakes? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why might it be difficult to feel some earthquakes? (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is important for people to learn how to stay safe during an earthquake? Why? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of the Earth looking like a giant jigsaw puzzle with colourful tectonic plates fitting together.



Extension challenge: Research one place in the world where earthquakes happen often. Write two sentences about what it is like to live there.