

Shaking Ground: Understanding Earthquakes with Finn

Hold onto your hats! Join Finn the dolphin as we dive deep beneath the Earth's surface to discover why the ground shakes.

- The Earth's outer shell is made of giant, puzzle-like pieces called tectonic plates that are constantly moving, though usually too slowly for us to feel.
- When two plates grind past one another, they can get stuck; when they finally snap free, the sudden release of energy creates seismic waves that shake the ground.
- A 'fault line' is a crack in the Earth's crust where plates have moved; these are the most common locations for earthquake activity.
- The 'epicentre' is the point on the Earth's surface directly above where the earthquake actually starts deep underground.
- Not all earthquakes happen on land; some occur under the ocean, which can occasionally cause large waves known as tsunamis.

Did you know? Did you know? Scientists use a device called a seismograph to record the strength of an earthquake. The largest earthquake ever recorded happened in Chile in 1960 and had a magnitude of 9.5—that is enough energy to travel all the way around the Earth!

Key vocabulary: Tectonic plates · Epicentre · Seismograph · Crust · Fault line · Magnitude · Lithosphere