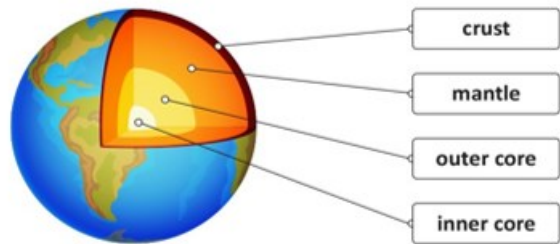


Key vocabulary

Epicentre	The exact location on the Earth's surface that is directly above an earthquake.
Eruption column	A cloud of super-heated ash and gas produced during a volcanic eruption.
Fault line	A break in the Earth's crust.
Magma	Hot molten rock found in the Earth's mantle.
Pumice stone	A very lightweight igneous rock produced by a volcano.
Richter scale	A mathematical scale (1-10) used by scientists to describe the size of an earthquake. 1 is the weakest and 10 is the strongest.
Seismometer	A device used to measure and record the strength and duration of an earthquake.
Tectonic plate	A large, moving piece of rock that makes up the Earth's crust.
Vent	An opening in the Earth's crust through which lava escapes.
Volcanic ash	Tiny pieces of jagged rock and volcanic glass.
Volcanic eruption	The sudden and violent explosion of lava, gas, ash and rock out of a volcano.
Tsunamis	Volcanic eruptions or earthquakes under the sea can cause large waves called tsunamis.

Earth

The earth is made of different layers. The inner core is made mostly of solid iron, and the outer core is made of liquid iron and nickel. The mantle is made of solid rock and liquid called magma. The crust is a thin layer of solid rock that is broken into pieces called tectonic plates. These pieces move very slowly across the mantle.



Earthquakes

An earthquake happens when two tectonic plates move along a fault line. The earth shakes violently, especially at the centre of an earthquake, which is called the epicenter. Strong earthquakes can cause a lot of damage. Buildings and roads can be destroyed and people can be killed. Scientists use a machine called a seismometer and a numbered scale called the Richter scale to measure the strength of earthquakes. Many countries, including New Zealand, Ecuador and Nepal, have all been affected by strong earthquakes in recent years.

Ring of Fire

The Ring of Fire runs around the edge of the Pacific Ocean and is made up of fault lines in the Earth's crust. Most of the world's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions happen along the Ring of Fire.

Tremors

Volcanoes

When a volcano erupts, liquid magma collects in and underground magma chamber. The magma pushes through a crack called a vent and bursts out onto the Earth's surface. Lava, hot ash and mudslides from volcanic eruptions can cause severe damage.



Natural disasters

Large earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis are known as natural disasters because they are created by nature, affect many people and cause widespread damage. Other natural disasters include avalanches, droughts, floods, hurricanes, storms and wildfires.

