

EXTREME WEATHER

Lesson Plan

Tsunami Topics

Lesson Plan for *Tsunamis*

Grade 3

Objective

To help students practice identifying three main ideas in a short chapter.

Things Needed:

- Several copies of the *Tsunamis* book
- Paper and pencils

Before the Activity

Have students read the *Tsunamis* book.

Activity

The book gives readers many kinds of information about tsunamis and their impacts. The information is divided into four chapters. Split students into four groups, assigning each group one of the book's chapters:

- Chapter 1: How Tsunamis Form
- Chapter 2: Where Tsunamis Form
- Chapter 3: Damage
- Chapter 4: Staying Safe

Students should reread their group's chapter. Then they should work together to determine the chapter's three main ideas. Each group should choose a scribe to write these main ideas on a sheet of paper. Each idea should be written as a complete sentence. The group should also choose a spokesperson who will read these three sentences out loud to the rest of the class.

Give students a few minutes to read the chapters and write their answers in their groups. Then come back together as a class. Have each group's spokesperson read the sentences out loud.



Evaluation

Ask each group's scribe to write the names of all group members at the top of the paper, along with the chapter they studied. Then collect the papers and use the attached answer key to give each group 1 point for each main idea its members identify.

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.2), and writing standards, grade 3 (W 3.4).

Answer Key

Answers will vary somewhat, but the main ideas students identify should be similar to the following examples.

Chapter 1: How Tsunamis Form

- Landslides or volcanic eruptions can cause tsunamis, but most tsunamis happen because of earthquakes.
- These earthquakes are caused by tectonic plates moving deep beneath the ocean floor.
- These plates create waves when they slide or crash together, and the waves grow very tall as they move toward the shore.

Chapter 2: Where Tsunamis Form

- Most tsunamis happen in the Pacific Ocean and hit countries along the ocean's coast.
- Tsunamis are especially common in the Ring of Fire, an area in the Pacific Ocean that has many volcanoes and tectonic plates.
- Tsunamis can also happen in other places that get earthquakes, such as the Indian Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

Chapter 3: Damage

- Tsunamis hit the shore with huge waves of fast-moving water that can knock over buildings.
- Tsunamis can cause floods, which can drown people and make water unsafe to drink.
- After hitting the shore, a tsunami's waves rush back out to sea and can pull people, soil, and objects out into the ocean with them.

Chapter 4: Staying Safe

- Scientists send out warnings to help people evacuate an area before a tsunami hits.
- If people can't evacuate, they can go to higher ground so they are more likely to stay above water when the waves hit.
- People should stay away from flooded areas after a tsunami to avoid drowning or being shocked by downed power lines.

