

Natural Disasters – Learning Activities

Title – Natural Disasters

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Subject – Science, Social Studies, Art, Language Arts

Grade Level – 5 and 6

Natural Disasters Unit Overview

KLAs: English, Human Society, Science and Information Skills

Timeframe: 10 weeks

Literary Text Types: Personal Response

Factual Text Types: Information Report; Procedural Recount; and Explanation

This unit focuses on the natural and community effects of natural disasters.

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Codes used for teaching focus:

F = Field Knowledge; **D** = Deconstruction; **J** = Joint Construction; **I** = Independent Construction

Learning Activities	
F:	<p>1. Explain the tasks required by the end of the unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing a narrative on the impact of a natural disaster on a community • writing information report on one type of natural disaster • jointly designing and producing a poster to support aid to communities suffering from a natural disaster • giving an oral information report on one type of natural disaster • giving an oral personal response to a news account of a natural disaster • jointly writing an explanation of one type of natural disaster • writing a procedural explanation about how to make a working model of a volcano • Explain that the students learn how to do these things by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading and talking about different types of natural disasters 2. Examining and deconstructing examples of the different text types 3. As a whole class, jointly constructing different types of text 4. In pairs or groups, producing different text types 5. Writing their own independent texts
F:	<p>2. Negotiating the Field</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm: write “Natural Disasters” on the board. List on cards Natural disasters usually cause great harm to people and damage the land.

F:	3. Building the field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to suggest other ways to categorize the different disasters eg. Air, Water, Land or Weather, Earth. • Jointly organize cards on board under those headings. • Mix the cards up again and have the students group and record them individually under their headings. 	
F: D:	4. Building the Field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition match worksheet • Review the purpose of information reports • Introduce headings for information report (See worksheet: What, where, how p. 129?) • Review the purpose of information reports • Discuss who might read this information – parents, other Year 5 and 6 students, younger students. Write with the audience in mind. • Revisit the structure of information reports, using sample reports. Highlight and revise topic sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Explain that the information will also presented orally to the class ◦ Provide criteria for the information report, including the use of diagrams, headings, etc. 	
D:	5. Locating information about natural disasters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D: Shared reading – <i>Natural Disasters</i> Big book The teacher demonstrates how to use a table of contents, index and how to read a diagram • Notetaking activity • Students vote on what natural disaster they would like to research • Students work in Guided Reading Groups • One student reads to the group a text on the natural disaster that they have chosen. • Other students make notes onto Seven Strips (See worksheet) 	
F:	6. Group Activity – Accessing information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students work in groups of 4 – 6, researching a chosen disaster. • Students negotiate form and style of presentation or use GRASP report scaffold. (See proforma) • Students begin to draft an information report about their chosen type of disaster • Work on the information report continues throughout the unit 	Assessment Task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently construct a written information report • The information report is due in the second last week of the unit <p>Go to Assessment Rubric</p>

D: & I	<p>7. Introduce explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are they used for? • Who would be able to explain how a volcano or tornado occurs? • Why would you need to know? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Note down the answers • Show the difference between information report, explanation and procedure using sample texts • Discuss the purpose and structural differences noticed • Review earthquake terminology • Read Earthquake chapter in big book • As groups the students begin to draft written explanation of one type of natural disaster
F:	<p>8. Recording information about natural disasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before and after viewing worksheet. (See proforma) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Notetaking from volcanoes video • Students record what they already know about volcanoes in the <i>Before and After</i> section of the worksheet. • Whole class views video • Rewind and on the same day view a small section of the video • Students record what they recall of the video on the After section of the worksheet
F:	<p>9. Jigsaw activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students prepare material for jigsaw activity where they share in groups information about the topic • Teacher models presentation of information to groups • Students prepare information to share with a new group
I:	<p>10. Students form new groups with all topics represented in each group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regroup class after discussion and report on activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ information ◦ style ◦ availability of material ◦ use of graphics ◦ use of other visual aids

J:	<p>11. Topic groups plan presentation for whole class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ presentation style ◦ accuracy information presented ◦ use of graphical aids ◦ manner of presentation 	
J: & I:	<p>12. Presentations over one or maybe two weeks</p>	<p>Assessment Task: Presentations assesses individual Oral Presentation rubric Go to Assessment Rubric</p>
F:	<p>13. Whole class matrix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After student presentations, whole class adds information to the matrix 	
D:	<p>14. Earthquake Deconstruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show large version of <i>How Do Earthquakes Happen?</i> • Use tables to show how the plates collide • Model the stages of the explanation using two desks • Label the stages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ title ◦ phenomenon ◦ sequence • Mix the paragraphs up and have students sort • Point out the structure that makes the explanation flow and the use of <i>when</i> and <i>as</i> conjunctions • Students cut and paste individual worksheets • Students highlight the structure on their sheets – circle the conjunctions • Other deconstruction activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Close passage with topic words and conjunctions removed ◦ Read another explanation and highlight the structure. (See stapler explanation) 	

F:	<p>15. Building the field: Cyclones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ big books ◦ other print and screen-based material on cyclones • Class notes down main information on <i>how</i> cyclones occur • Define new terms • View the cyclone segment from <i>Weather</i> video by Mike Bailey • Conduct simple experiments to demonstrate warm air rising and cool air sinking • Label cyclone worksheet 	
J:	<p>16. Jointly construct an explanation of how a cyclone occurs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the use of sequence and appropriate conjunctions • Discuss how a diagram helps make an explanation clearer and more explicit 	<p>Assessment Task: Jointly construct written explanation of one type of natural disaster The explanation is due in the third last week of the unit Go to Assessment Rubric</p>
F & I	<p>17. Volcano Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students jointly read the procedure about how to construct a model volcano • In groups of three or four the students construct the model • Groups of students demonstrate their models to the whole class • Students independently write a procedural explanation about how to make a working model of a volcano which could be used by younger students to actually make the model • Students demonstrate their own working models to a class of younger students • Students then read their procedural explanations to the younger children 	<p>Assessment Task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently written procedural explanation about how to make a working model of a volcano <p>Go to Assessment Rubric</p>

F:	<p>18. Discuss why it might be important to have instruments to measure the wind</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the reasons • What sort of organizations do we have to cope with serious wind storms? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ List them and what each one does <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Emergency Services ▪ Fire ▪ Police ▪ Ambulance ▪ Air rescue ▪ Coast Guard ◦ What would happen without these services? 	
F & I	<p>19. How do natural disaster affect people?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read a variety of recounts of disasters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Pompei ◦ Mt St Helens ◦ San Fransico Earthquake ◦ Sydney bushfires ◦ PNG Tsunami • Discuss the structural differences between factual recounts, information reports and narratives • Students independently write a narrative about the impact of a natural disaster on a community 	<p>Assessment Task: Narrative on the impact of a natural disaster on a community Go to Assessment Rubric</p>
F:	<p>20. Communicative Crossword</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In pairs the students design a communicative crossword using topic words and field knowledge of natural disasters 	
F: & I	<p>21. How do natural disasters affect people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students complete the activity sheet • Students independently draft an oral personal response to a news account of a natural disaster • Presentation of oral personal responses 	<p>Assessment Task: Oral personal response to a news account of a natural disaster Go to Assessment Rubric</p>

F: & J	<p>22. Oral discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should we send aid to disaster victims in other countries? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What is our country's responsibility? ◦ What is the individual's responsibility? ◦ How is money raised? • Examine posters used to persuade people to give money • Jointly deconstruct an example poster examining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ layout ◦ text ◦ graphics • Use the visual proforma as a guide 	
I:	<p>23. Design brief: an appeal poster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the techniques used by designers of posters to persuade • In pairs students design and produce a poster to support aid to communities suffering from a natural disaster • Students may use real or fictitious disasters 	<p>Assessment Task: Assess poster on its information, layout and persuasive qualities Go to Assessment Rubric</p>
F:	<p>24. Consolidation – Question and answer game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students write down a question and the answer on separate pieces of paper about the topic • Papers distributed to other students • Students read their question / answer and then move about the room to find the person with the matching paper 	

<p>F:</p>	<p>25. Information Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students read one another's information reports • Students discuss and critique these reports 	<p>Assessment Task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently constructed written information report on one type of natural disaster. • These information reports have been worked on during the whole unit • Information reports are assessed using task sheet criteria and information report structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ paragraphs ◦ grouping of information ◦ topic sentences ◦ punctuation and spelling <p>Go to Assessment Rubric</p>
<p>D:</p>	<p>26. Text type recognition activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students individually read a text • Students place the text into the pile for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Narrative ◦ Literary Recount ◦ Observation ◦ Literary Description ◦ Personal Response ◦ Review ◦ Factual Description ◦ Information Report ◦ Procedure ◦ Procedural Recount ◦ Factual Recount ◦ Explanation ◦ Exposition ◦ Discussion 	<p>Assessment Task: Recognition of text types Go to Assessment Rubric</p>

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