

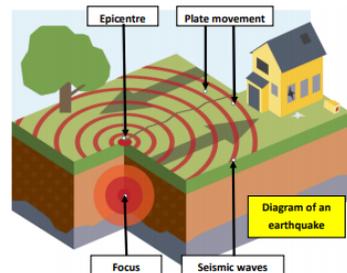
# Culture Week English Knowledge Organiser – Natural Disasters (Earthquakes)

## Important Information

A natural disaster is an event caused by nature such as a flood, earthquake or hurricane. These events cause great damage or loss of life.

## Types of Natural Disasters

Avalanche	A rapid flow of snow down a sloping surface – usually a mountain.
Earthquake	The shaking of the Earth, resulting from the sudden release of energy underground that creates seismic waves.
Landslide	A rapid flow of stones, rocks or soil down a sloping surface.
Flood	An overflow of water that submerges land that is usually dry.
Sinkhole	A deep hole in the ground caused by some form of collapse of the surface layer.
Tsunami	A long, high sea wave usually caused by underwater earthquakes.
Volcanic eruption	The sudden occurrence of a violent discharge of steam and volcanic material from a volcano.
Wildfire/Forest fire	A large, destructive fire that spreads quickly over woodland or brush.
Drought	A prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall, leading to a shortage of water.



## Key Vocabulary

bedrock	The solid rock that lies beneath the loose surface of the Earth.
crust	The outer layer of the Earth (it is about 35km thick).
epicentre	A point, directly above the true centre of an earthquake, from which shock waves radiate.
seismic	Relating to or caused by earthquakes.
shock wave	A sharp change of pressure travelling through the earth or the air caused by explosions, earthquakes or eruptions.
tectonic plates	A small number of plates that make up the surface of the Earth.

## Earthquakes and Japan

Japan has such a large potential for earthquakes and disaster because the nation sits atop four huge slabs of the Earth's crust, called tectonic plates. These plates mash and grind together and trigger deadly earthquakes.

Japan lies along the **Pacific Ring of Fire** a narrow zone around the Pacific Ocean where a large chunk of Earth's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. Roughly 90 percent of all the world's earthquakes and 80 percent of the largest ones strike along the Ring of Fire.

