

Causes and Effects of Natural Disasters

Part 1: Read each sentence. Then, circle the cause and underline the effect found in each sentence.

For example: The volcano erupted and large amounts of dust filled the air.

Reminder: The **cause** is an event or idea that explains why something happens. The **effect** is what happens as a result of the cause.

1. When the earthquake shook the Philippines, many buildings collapsed.
2. The hail storm produced golf-ball-sized ice that broke my car's windshield.
3. The tornado blew through town and flipped the cars over.
4. The power went out because the power lines snapped from the ice storm.
5. The brown bear's habitat was destroyed after the wildfire broke out.

Part 2: Use the word bank to fill in the sentence frames. Then, circle the cause and underline the effect found in each sentence.

hurricane lightning earthquake blizzard avalanche fire tsunami flood

1. A severe blizzard hit the mountains and triggered a huge avalanche.

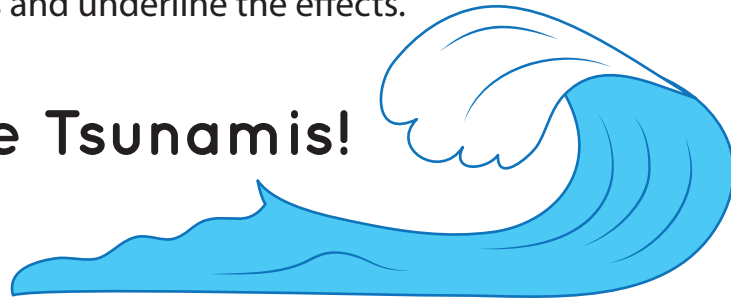
2. The tree caught on fire after one of its branches was struck by lightning.

3. The heavy rains from the hurricane led to a large flood.

4. There was a tsunami warning after the earthquake struck off the coast.

Part 3: Read this nonfiction excerpt on tsunamis. Highlight the sentences containing causes and effects. Then, circle the causes and underline the effects.

Explore Tsunamis!



On December 26, 2004, a massive tsunami rose from the Indian Ocean. This tsunami was one of the most destructive natural disasters anyone had ever seen before. Where did these disastrous waves come from, and how was this tsunami able to hit so quickly without warning?

There are several different situations that can cause a tsunami: underwater volcanic eruptions, meteor strikes, coastal landslides, and, most commonly, underwater earthquakes.

A typical tsunami approaching land will slow down to speeds of 30 miles per hour as the wave grows to heights of up to 90 feet above sea level. A tsunami almost always promises flooding, destruction, and sometimes loss of life.

Scientists have the equipment to detect underwater earthquakes just before a tsunami can hit the coast. However, because these giant waves form so quickly and hit coastal areas at hundreds of miles per hour, these detections often come too late. If you live near the coast, be aware of tsunami zones. Make sure your family has a plan in case you are caught near the wave.