



Activities and Lesson Plans Linked to “Head for higher Ground”

Activity: What’s The Plan?

Intended age: Grade 5-9.

Abstract:

In this activity, students will be tasked with writing a response plan after the tsunami warning system has been activated. The activity can be done individually or in groups, and is encouraged to be based on your own community. The activity focuses on assessing buildings, systems and available emergency responses to tsunami threats.

What you need:

- Pictures from around the community including: Buildings, schools, road ways, farm lands, daycare centers, rec centers, pools and theaters.
- “Head to Higher Ground” from Ocean Alive
- Pen and paper for each student
- Worksheet (attached) or Mind-map

Hook:

5- 10 minutes

- Ask the students to think about what they know about tsunamis and the impacts that tsunamis have on coastal communities. If appropriate, you may wish to focus their attention to the Japan Tsunami in 2011 or the Sumatra Tsunami in 2004. You may want to include images or video from the tsunamis as well, depending on your class.

Body of the Lesson

20-30 minutes

- Hand out the pictures from around the community, and ask each group/student to think of how the items in the image would be impacted by a tsunami. For more discussion, you can have the students think about the impact of a small tsunami, only a few feet high, and then the impact of a large tsunami, several dozen feet high.
- Allow the students to brainstorm how tsunamis would affect each of the items individually, and the community as a whole. Be sure to think about the after effects of the tsunami, such as how people and animals will get drinking water, move goods, get medical help and prevent continued destruction from fires and disease in the weeks after the event.
- Play “Head to Higher Ground” from Ocean Alive. What interesting facts did the students learn about the Tsunami that they might not have known before? What surprised them in this piece?
- Repeat the exercise with the pictures, but this time, tell the students that the residents would have been given 30 or 40 seconds advanced warning of intense shaking, and 30-40 minutes advanced warning of a Tsunami. What should the emergency response plan be for each of the areas in the picture?



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- Optional: have the student draft a response plan for their classroom. What would each person be expected to do when the alarm sounded? What should each person in the school do when the alarm sounds?
- Optional: explore Tsunami threats in your area and discuss how to mitigate these impacts. For example, are there lake-side mountain slopes that could produce landslides and cause destructive waves in your community?

Conclusion of the Lesson

5-10 minutes

- Discuss the various plans created by the students. What damages and impacts can be mitigated by having a solid response plan in place?
- Discuss the process for implementing such as response in your school or community. What steps will need to be taken to get a plan implemented? Whom would your students need to speak with to get the plan in place?
- Discuss possible changes to local infrastructure. What can be done to improve your community’s response during a tsunami? After a tsunami? Are there other benefits to spending the time and money to improve the infrastructure? (i.e. improved resilience to flooding, weather or earthquakes?)



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What is the picture of?

What impacts would you expect from a small (2 meter) Tsunami?

What impacts would you expect from a large (10 meter) Tsunami?

What after effects would you expect if a tsunami struck here? (i.e. Will activities continue here after a tsunami impact? How will goods and supplies be delivered to this area after an impact?)

Your location has received a 30 second warning that intense shaking is about to occur. What is the response plan for this space?

Your location has received a warning that a tsunami will occur in the next 30-40 minutes. What is the response plan for this space?



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