



Maggie's Activity Pack

Name _____

Date _____

On the Scene of the Chilean Earthquake

It was the last weekend before the new school year was to begin. Chileans were sound asleep. The streets were empty. But around 3:30 in the morning, people woke to a shaking that lasted about 2 minutes. One of the most powerful earthquakes in recent history was rocking Chile. Our "reporter" on the scene, the translator for Maggie's Earth Adventures, was one of those Chileans who awoke to the violent shaking. She says the rocking was awful and seemed to last for a long time. We are happy to report that she and her family are fine. While their glasses, lamps, and paintings are destroyed, they know they are fortunate. Many people lost their lives during this terrible disaster.



Vivian's son looks at the damage in his yard.

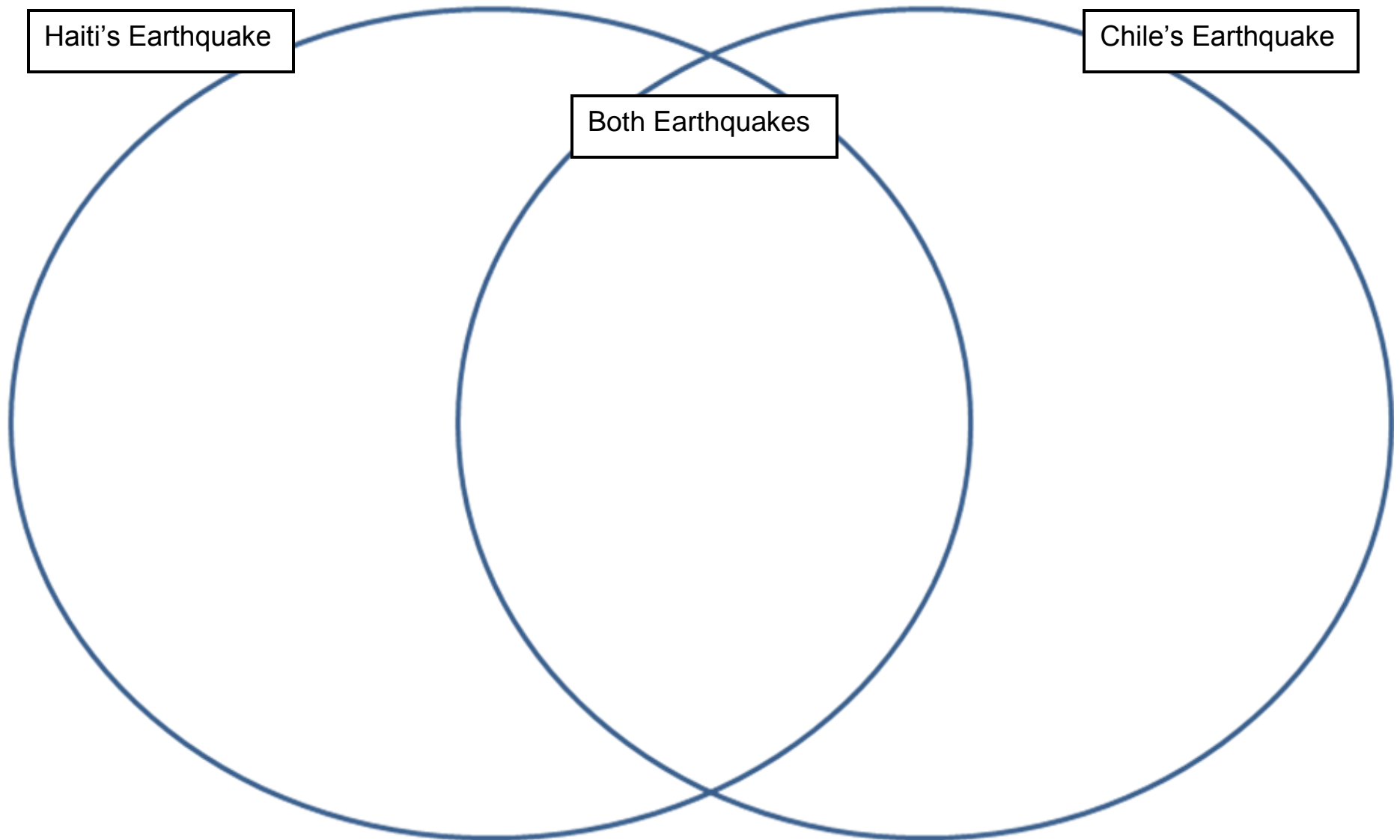
The Chilean earthquake follows the tragic Haitian earthquake of January 12th. Many Haitians had never felt an earthquake. That 7.0 quake struck in the afternoon near a large city. But Chileans are familiar with earthquakes. They have strict building codes so that their structures are better able to withstand an earthquake. And the quake of February 27th was centered off the Chilean coast, not near a large city as was the Haitian earthquake. Vivian tells us that the time the earthquake struck was something to be thankful for as most people were at home, sound asleep. Cars and buses were not on the roads. People were not at work so did not need to rush home to check on their families. Despite these factors, the death toll and reports of destruction continue to climb in Chile. Seismologists are monitoring the many strong aftershocks. One of these was measured at a strong 6.9 shock.

Chileans are familiar with earthquakes as their country is located on the Pacific Rim of Fire, a 40,000 kilometer horseshoe-shaped area where there are frequent earthquakes and volcanoes. Below Chile, two tectonic plates, the Nazca and South American Plates have been slipping and snagging on each other. The Nazca Plate moves about 3 inches each year under the South American Plate This causes many earthquakes in the area.

Earth movement also causes large waves, called tsunamis, to roll from the unstable sea floor. You may not be able to see these waves on the ocean's surface, but the powerful undercurrent rolls toward various coastlines. After the February 27th earthquake, many countries issued tsunami warnings. Beaches in Hawaii were cleared of people. Australians watched for a tsunami. Scientists from tsunami warning centers monitored buoys in the ocean designed to let people know of approaching big waves. Many of these systems were put into place after the terrible tsunami disaster in December 2004. This time the destructive waves stayed close to the site of the earthquake. Many towns along Chile's Pacific coast were destroyed when water violently rushed ashore.

As you are reading this, the world works to help both Haiti and Chile recover from these disasters. International aid organizations provide food, medical care, and supplies to those in need. The citizens of many countries are ready to extend a helping hand to neighbors they have never met.

As you this article discusses, there are some things about the earthquake in Haiti and the earthquake in Chile that are the same. Other things are different. Look at this Venn Diagram. Use the facts to compare and contrast these disasters.



Dear Colleague,

As you read in our student article, our trusted translator, Vivian Fosk, felt the earthquake and is experiencing the aftershocks, both literally and figuratively. We all send our best as she and her family struggle to recover personally and as their country deals with this disaster. As you know, we all face difficult questions as educators regarding how to deal with the death and destruction as children turn on the television and see news reports. This is just one of the many difficult situations we find ourselves dealing with in classrooms. Vivian notes below that these concerns are already being addressed in Chile.

As the picture of her son illustrates, children often have a resilient attitude. And they watch how adults deal with situations. We, at Maggie's Earth Adventures, want to help your children understand these disasters and to look at the massive outpouring of support the people of Haiti and Chile are receiving from the world. We suggest that discussing ways to assist those in need will give children a sense of empowerment and helps with the grief some may be feeling. I have found that it helps children to talk about issues rather than ignoring them. As Vivian writes, "I got an email from the school's principal, saying that all teachers are being trained to be able to deal with the children. They said that later on today they will send us some links to explain to students what is happening."

Below, I copied information sent to us by Vivian. She describes both the night of the earthquake and the physical and emotional aftershocks. Her words are on a separate page so that you can copy for your students or read aloud selected portions. Of course, this depends on their age and understanding. Her words are powerful.

Let us know what you do –

Kathy

Answers will vary but children should note the following:

Differences in the Haiti and Chile section of the Venn Diagram –

Date

Earthquake strength

Time each earthquake struck

Outcomes based on experiences with earthquakes

Tsunami damage in Chile

Similarities will include:

The many problems for people in each country

The outpouring of help

Goals:

Children will read an article about the recent earthquake in Chile. Included in the Dear Colleague letter is a detailed description of our translator's experience during this quake. A follow-up Venn Diagram asks children to consider the similarities and differences of these disasters. It is suggested teachers emphasize the help that is offered to these countries. This activity is available on the primary and intermediate levels and correlates with the National Social Studies Standards: Culture, People, Places and Environment.

See the next page for Vivan's report.



Vivian Fosk, Maggie's Earth Adventures, Reports From Chile!

The Night of the Earthquake

My husband, my dog and I were sleeping when the earthquake started. I thought it was just "another one." It didn't start with full force; it was escalating. Electricity went out. I live on the first floor of a 4 story building. My husband jumped out of bed and opened the sliding door to the garden and screamed at me to go out with him because this thing was big. I realized that it was becoming strong. Things started falling. The alarms of all the surrounding houses went off and it was very hard to walk. It was like trying to walk on a small rocking boat. We stood in the middle of the garden, just listening to things falling and glass breaking. The pool was making a noise like waves crashing. We had a full moon, so it was not pitch black outside. I kept trying to remain calm and repeating "Okay, it's going to stop." My husband and I could barely stay standing. I kept yelling for the dog, but he was nowhere to be found. Later we found him all curled up in another room, locked in because the doors all closed by themselves. I found it very strange that dogs did not bark this time. Usually, when there's a shake, dogs start barking a few seconds before. This time the dogs did nothing.

In our house, the closets opened and things fell out. Pictures fell from the walls, monitors fell all over the place, and in general, all the furniture "walked." The refrigerator, the big bookshelves, everything that didn't fall, moved at least one foot from where it previously was.

When it stopped, our hearts, and the dog's, were pounding so fast that you could hear them. I ran to the house to grab my cell phone because I wanted to call my children who were both staying over at friend's house for the night. We heard people screaming in the hallway to get out because there might be a big aftershake. We ran out of the building, where all the neighbors were comforting each other and most were trying to call their relatives and loved ones. After about 10 minutes I was able to reach my 12 year old daughter, who was scared but fine and 10 minutes later I reached my 10 year old son, who luckily, was fine too. Then we just waited for the sun to come out, so we could get our children and assess the damage.

The After Shocks

We've had over 250 aftershakes, but of course nothing as strong as the big one. They're just scary but don't cause damage. But it is shocking what is happening.

In Concepción they had to declare a zone of catastrophe, with a curfew starting at 8pm. They still have no energy or water, therefore no stores are open, nor gas stations, because they have no energy to pump. Lots of people are desperate for the basics, water, milk, diapers, etc. But of course, there are groups of delinquents who take advantage of the situation and they are causing a huge mess. They have been looting supermarkets, stores, houses, etc., and sometimes when they finish, they start a fire! It's very chaotic.

Everything is changing daily. Yesterday, for example, people went to work for the first time after the earthquake and many found their places of work completely destroyed. Everything was messy, with things all over the place. Many people were sent home because the building's structures need to be checked. Schools were supposed to start yesterday and so far it's been delayed until next Monday.

One interesting thing was how useful the old fashioned am/fm radio was. Since we had no tv nor power, all we could rely on for information was the radio, which immediately started working as a liaison between people who were not able to communicate with their loved ones.