

Prepare, Act, Survive – Student Worksheet

San Francisco - A case of poor planning

The western American city of San Francisco lies on a major transform fault line. One tectonic plate grinds its way north past another grinding south. Earthquakes are common. The city had a devastating earthquake in 1906. 3,000 people died and 80% of the city was destroyed. 90% of the damage was not caused by the ground shaking but by fires that followed the earthquake. There was no city plan for earthquakes and earthquake damage. Many of the houses were built of wood and were close together. Wood burning stoves were used in kitchens for cooking and on this occasion breakfast fires spread quickly from collapsed houses to their neighbours. Some of the fires were also caused by untrained firemen using dynamite to bring down dangerous semi-collapsed buildings. It is believed that many others were started by building owners in an attempt to get insurance compensation, as companies did not provide cover for earthquake damage. No one was prepared. No one knew what to do.

People and trade moved elsewhere and it took years for the city to regain its infrastructure and status. The effects of more recent earthquakes have been handled better.

We certainly have little chance of stopping natural disasters from happening but we can, with scientific research, understand what is happening and how to mitigate their outcomes.

Bushfire or fire caused by lightning strike - what can we do?

Bushfires are not uncommon in Western Australia. Country schools have established plans, which are known to staff and students. Recent hot summers have shown that suburban metropolitan schools can be threatened as well.

DFES suggests that we **“Prepare, Act and Survive”**.

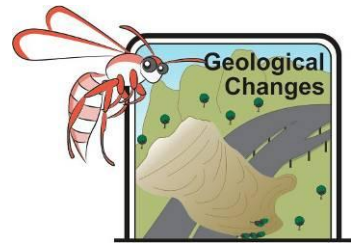
Your school has plans for how to act in case of any kind of fire.



1. PREPARE

What has already been **prepared** in case of a fire at your school?

How would you know there is a fire at your school? _____



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2. ACT

How should teachers and students act? What would you advise teachers and students to do?



3. Survive

What would be done if anyone had been hurt? _____

What should those who have not been hurt do? _____

What would happen if the building had been badly damaged? _____

Natural Disasters

List five natural disasters you can think of below

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____