**Conversational Topic**

**Natural Disasters**

A natural disaster is an event (often geologic in nature) that causes losses of life and damage to property.

Natural disasters include such hazards as **earthquakes** (землетрясения), **floods** (потоп, наводнение), **landslides** (оползни), hurricanes, **subsidence** (проседание, обвал, осадка поверхности, опадение породы), **tsunamis**, **soil creeps** (сползание почвы), **avalanches** (лавина, снежный обвал), and other geologic phenomena.

Further information is about earthquakes and tsunamis.

We know that during an earthquake the ground shakes, a lot of buildingsfall down and sometimes **cracks appear** in the earth. But what **makes** an earthquake happen?

Planet Earth **is covered with** a thick **crust**. The crust is cracked into more than twenty sections – a bit like **the shell** ofa boiled egg when you tap it with a spoon. These cracked sections are called **tectonic plates** and they are always **on the move**. They move very slowly, but **with incredible power**. When the plates **rub against each other**, an earthquake happens.

Earthquakes happen all the time in all parts of the world but we don’t **notice** (замечать) most of them because they are small. But big earthquakes are really dangerous. They can make buildings fall down, **set off landslides** and do other deadlythings.

Have you heard about **the Rift Valley** in Africa? It was created by **repeated earthquakes** over thousands of years, which opened up the ground to form **an enormous trench**. The trench is so deep and wide that it can be seen from the moon!

The highest death toll caused by an earthquake was in China in 1556 when **at least** 830,000 people died.

Nowadays, new buildings in **earthquake-prone** cities are built **to withstand the shock** of an earthquake. **Even so**, during **seismic activities**, **gas pipe** and **electricity cable cause** fires and **explosions**, so even if buildings don’t fall down, there can **still** be a lot of destruction.

A tsunami is **a chain of huge waves**, again caused by an earthquake, but this time under **the seabed**.

Tsunami waves can be very long (as much as 100 kilometres) and there may be an hour between them.

They can move very fast, too, sometimes at a speed of 800 kilometres an hour. So if an earthquake happened in Los Angeles, a tsunami could hit Tokyo quicker than you could fly between the cities **by jet**.

When a tsunami reaches the coastline, it slows down but its height grows. There have been tsunamis as high as 30 metres **above sea level**! **No wonder** they are so dangerous.

The Christmas weekend tsunami of 2004 is probably the most destructive tsunami in history. It was caused by an earthquake in the Indian Ocean measuring 9.0 **on the Richter scale**. The huge waves crashed into several Asian countries and thousands of people lost their lives.

**Активная лексика (в порядке встречаемости в тексте)**

**crack** – разлом, трещина;

**crust** – кора, корка;

**shell** – раковина, скорлупа;

**tectonic** **plates** – тектонические плиты;

**landslide** – оползень;

**set off landslides** – вызывать оползни;

**valley** – долина;

**repeated earthquakes** – повторяющиеся землетрясения;

**trench** – котлован;

**enormous** **trench** – огромный котлован;

**earthquake-prone** – подверженный землетрясениям, сейсмоопасный;

**to withstand the shock** – выдержать (сопротивляться, противостоять) удар (сотрясение)

**seismic** **activities** – сейсмическая деятельность;

**gas pipe** – газовая труба;

**electricity cable –** электрический кабель;

**explosion** – взрыв;

**a chain of huge waves** – цепь огромных волн;

**the seabed** – морское дно;

**by jet** – на реактивном самолете;

**above the sea level** – выше уровня моря, над уровнем моря;

**on the Richter scale** – по шкале Рихтера

**with incredible power** – с невероятной силой;

**to rub against each other** – тереться друг о друга;

**cause fires** – вызывать пожары.

**Exercises**

**Ex. 1 Say what it is (guess the word).**

1. En extremely large wave in the sea caused, for example, by an earthquake.

2. A sudden, violent shaking of the earth’s surface.

3. The planet that we live on.

4. A range of levels and numbers used for measuring something.

5. A mass of soil, rock that falls down the slope of a mountain or a cliff.

6. The floor of the ocean.

7. A set of wires, covered in plastic or rubber, that carries electricity, telephone signals, etc.

8. A structure such as a house or school that has a roof and walls.

**Ex. 2 Give synonyms.**

Huge, a quake, to crash into each other, a blast, to lose life, unbelievable, to resist.

**Ex. 3 Give opposites.**

Above (sea level), safe, thin, creation, small, narrow.

**Ex. 4 Translate into English.**

Вызывать оползни, рушатся здания, трясется земля, во время землетрясения, толстая кора, в движении, с невероятной силой, друг друга, замечать большинство из них, по крайней мере (хотя бы), огромный котлован, отразить удар, во время сейсмической активности, огромные волны, на реактивном самолёте, над уровнем моря.

**Ex. 5. Answer the following questions.**

1. What geologic hazards do you know?

2. What happens during an earthquake?

3. When does an earthquake happen?

4. Why are big earthquakes dangerous?

5. What is an earthquake-prone city?

6. What is a tsunami?

7. What was the most destructive tsunami in history?