

Day 4 – Natural Hazards & Disasters

- Read **pages 15–16**.
- Discuss **volcanoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, and flooding**.
- Discuss how natural hazards can change the land and become natural disasters when they cause damage.
- Review the vocabulary word **structure**.
- Draw a picture of **one natural hazard**.
- Write a complete sentence naming the hazard and explaining **one way it can change the land**.

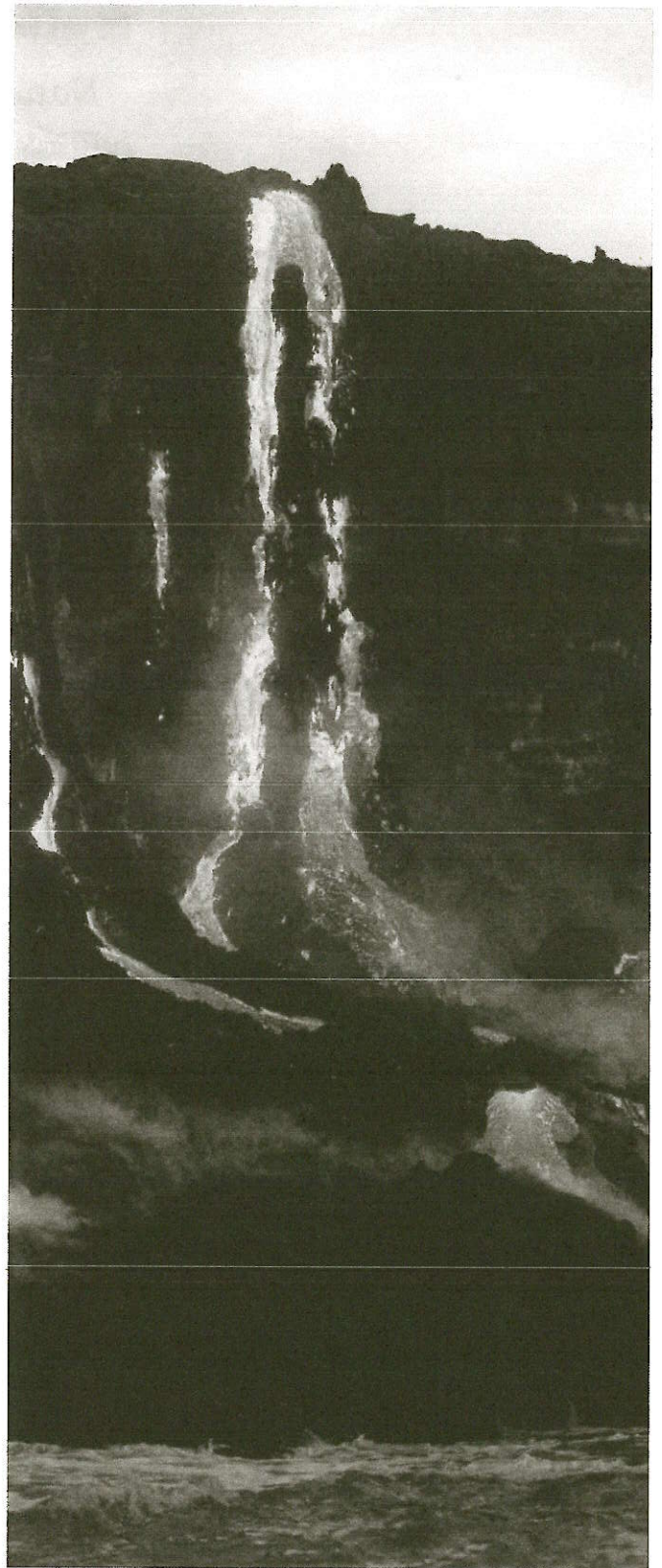
Natural Hazards

Have you ever watched a weather forecast? Perhaps you have heard about events in nature, called natural hazards. Some examples of natural hazards are volcanoes, hurricanes, and earthquakes. These physical processes can cause changes to the land. Some physical processes such as these are dramatic and happen quickly. Other physical processes, like erosion, happen slowly.

A volcano is a mountain that erupts in an explosion of molten rock (lava), gases, and ash. The lava, gases, and ash are forced out of the volcano. Hot lava flows down the side of the volcano. When it cools, it changes the land. The ash that falls down can make the soil rich, which helps plants grow. Volcanic eruptions have helped form some of the greatest mountain chains around the world.

A hurricane is a big storm with strong winds and a lot of rainfall. Heavy rains and wind from hurricanes can cause flooding. These factors shape and change the land.

An earthquake is a violent shaking of the earth. Many earthquakes strike along faults, or cracks in Earth's crust. The crust is the outer layer of Earth. Earthquakes can cause landslides and mudslides, which can change the landscape.



Hot lava flows from Kilauea Volcano in Hawaii.

Natural Disasters

Natural hazards can change the land in the environment. When they cause damage, they are natural disasters. A disaster is something that can cause damage to human-made structures such as buildings and bridges. It can wipe out land or form new land.

Academic Vocabulary

structure • *n.*,
something that is
constructed

In 2005, the most destructive hurricane to hit the United States moved ashore along the Gulf Coast. In New Orleans after the **structures** built to prevent flooding failed, about 80 percent of the city was underwater. Millions of people became homeless, and it has taken years to recover from the disaster.

Earthquakes have caused major damage around the world. More earthquakes strike California than any other state in our country.

New Orleans faces
extreme flooding during
Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

