

Earthquakes

Zuri and Friends

Made for Tlaloc

With love from the Faust book maker

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Zuri, Teo and Juno were friends. Pip, their owl, came too. In a California meadow, Teo held the recorder. "Earthquakes shake the ground," Zuri said. "Let's save its wiggles!"



Teo's elbow bumped the recorder. A huge scribble appeared. “Is that our earthquake?” “Your bump made that,” Zuri said. “An earthquake might not come today.” Teo lowered it.



Teo set the recorder down. He tapped his boot. “Will this start it?” A huge wiggle printed. Juno caught it. “Is that our earthquake?” “Your boot caused that,” Zuri said.



“Pip, please keep the recorder still,” Teo said. Pip landed with a plop, then hopped. A tangled wiggle appeared. “Is that our earthquake?” “No, Pip bumped it,” Zuri said.



“Let's find quiet ground,” Zuri said. They followed a dry creek. “Moving rocks bent this creek.” Juno held the boot scribble beside her sketchbook. “My earthquake space is empty!”

Did you know? California’s San Andreas Fault stretches about 1,300 kilometers. That is many days of walking.



Zuri set the recorder down. Its line went nearly flat. “The case moves; its hanging weight moves differently. That's how it tracks shaking. Let's find firm ground without bumps.”



Zuri chose flat ground. "Stuck rocks slip, shaking the ground." "Can we make one?" Teo asked. "No. We cannot tell when one will come. We may wait past sunset."

Did you know? If the ground shakes, drop, cover, and hold on.



Teo steadied the recorder's feet. Pip flapped. Teo stopped his boot above a loose cord. Zuri tucked the cord beside the recorder's screen. Everyone stepped back.



Tiny wiggles appeared on the recorder's display. "I don't feel anything," Juno said. "It notices movements we cannot feel," Zuri said. Zuri checked a tablet showing earthquakes and times.

Did you know? Small earthquakes can leave no visible ground cracks.



Zuri checked the earthquake reports. "The times match. A real earthquake made these wiggles!" The friends gathered quietly.

Did you know? Earthquake maps can show thousands of dots. Dots usually mark spots above underground earthquake starts.



Zuri finished recording and pressed the print button. Juno held her sketchbook open. Blank paper crept out with a soft whirr. The wiggle had not appeared yet.



Juno saved the printed wiggle. Teo's boot scribble sat beside it. "This is our earthquake!" Zuri cheered. Pip pointed to the tiny one. Teo checked his boot.



For grown-ups

The Pacific plate and the North American plate slide sideways. When stuck rocks slip, the ground shakes. A recorder holds a hanging weight. The case moves with the ground, and the weight does not, so a pen draws wiggles. A matching time can show that a distant earthquake made those wiggles. Nobody can say when the next one will come. If the ground shakes, drop, cover, and hold on.