Year 5 & 6 Geography Knowledge Organiser - Extreme Earth Spring 2022

Key Vocabulary

Blizzard: a severe snowstorm with high winds.

Climate: the long-term pattern of weather within an area.

Cyclone: a tropical storm originating in the Indian Ocean.

Drought: a shortage of water following a lack of rainfall.

Eruption: an explosion of steam and lava from a volcano.

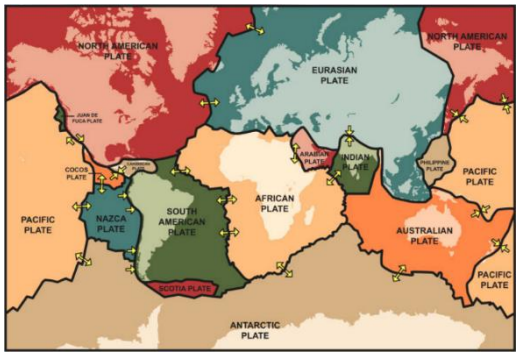
Hurricane: a tropical storm originating in the Atlantic Ocean

Tectonic plate: pieces of the Earth's crust (outer layer).

Tornado: a spiralling funnel of air descending from a storm cloud.

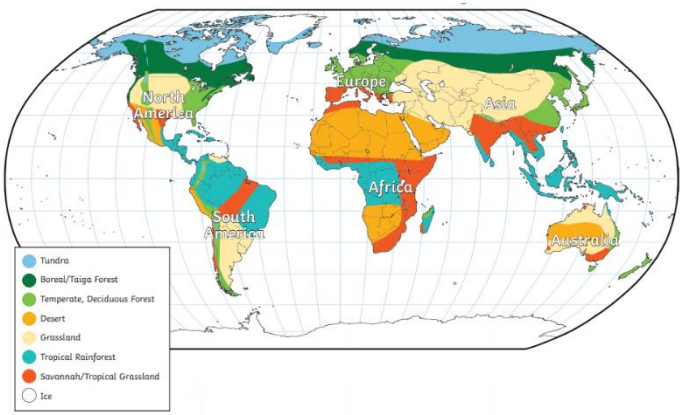
Typhoon: a tropical storm originating in the Pacific Ocean.

Volcano: an opening in the Earth's crust.



Biomes

The world can be divided into biomes. A biome is a large but specific geographical area with a particular climate, types of plants (flora) and types of animals (fauna). It is different to an ecosystem which is the interaction of living and non-living things in an environment. There are five major types of biomes: aquatic, grassland, forest, desert, and tundra, though some of these biomes can be further divided into more specific categories, such as freshwater, marine, savanna, tropical rainforest, temperate rainforest, and taiga.



Earthquakes and Tsunamis

The crust of the Earth is made up of plates of rock that fit together like a jigsaw. These are called tectonic plates. These plates are constantly moving, a few centimetres each year. Sometimes they get forced together, judder past each other then fall back to their original shapes. This causes seismic waves which create earthquakes. Earthquakes can be felt anywhere in the world, but most earthquakes happen along faults, where tectonic plates meet. They are measured using the Richter Scale. Tsunamis occur when an earthquake happens underwater. This causes shockwaves which disturb the water and create a giant wave or series of waves.

Volcanoes

The Earth is made up of several different layers. Underneath the crust is the mantle which is made up of semi-molten rock. Sometimes this rock becomes so pressurised that it turns into a liquid called magma. When the pressure becomes too great, the magma explodes through vents in the crust as lava. Toxic gas and ash are also released. These vents are volcanoes. They can be active, dormant or extinct.



Tropical Storms

Tropical storms develop in tropical areas of oceans. Types of these storms include hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones. The warm air in tropical regions, mixed with ocean currents and high sea temperatures, causes small thunderstorms which gather energy from the heat and make the storms become more powerful.

Climate change

Climate change refers to the process of our planet heating up. This will impact people and wildlife globally as some could find they are unable to adapt. It can also make weather more extreme and unpredictable. It is a serious problem that needs to be tackled.