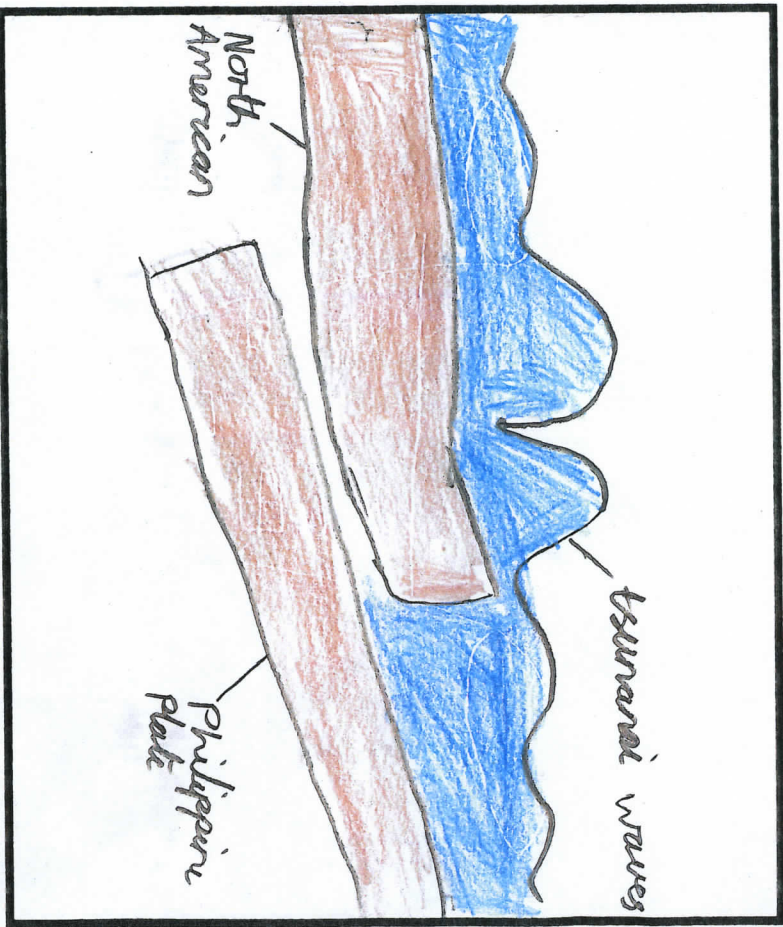
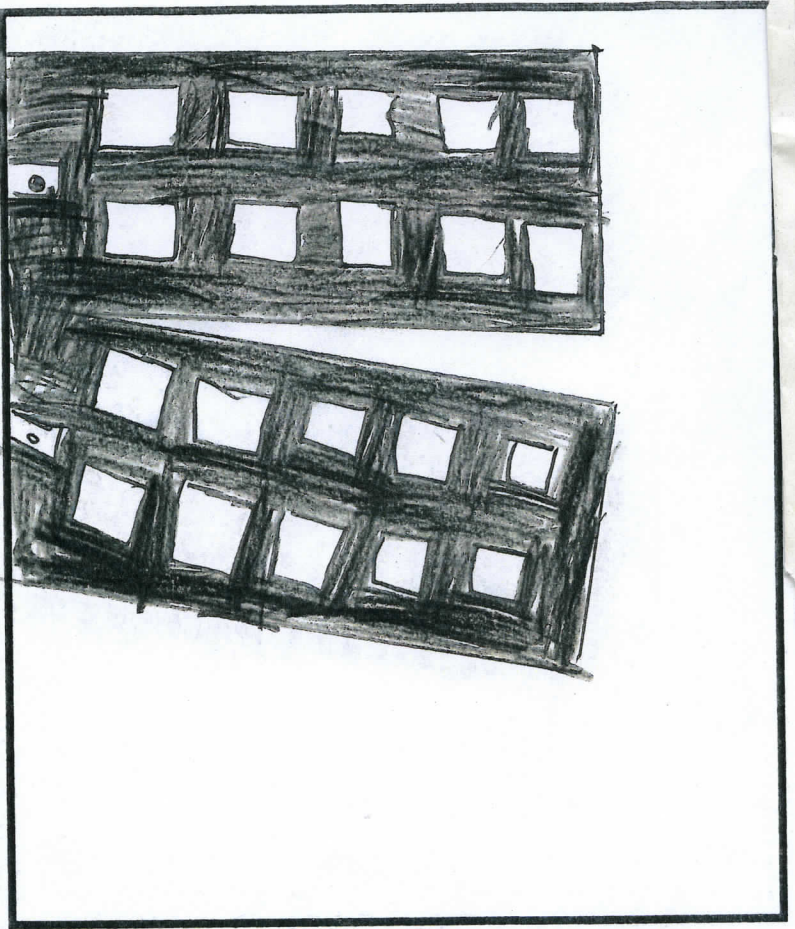


The Philippine plate was subducting (Pushing under) under the North American plate for millions of years so slowly that you wouldn't even notice. So much power had built up in the plate and it was waiting for the moment it would slip. On the 11th March at 2:46 pm that's exactly what happened.



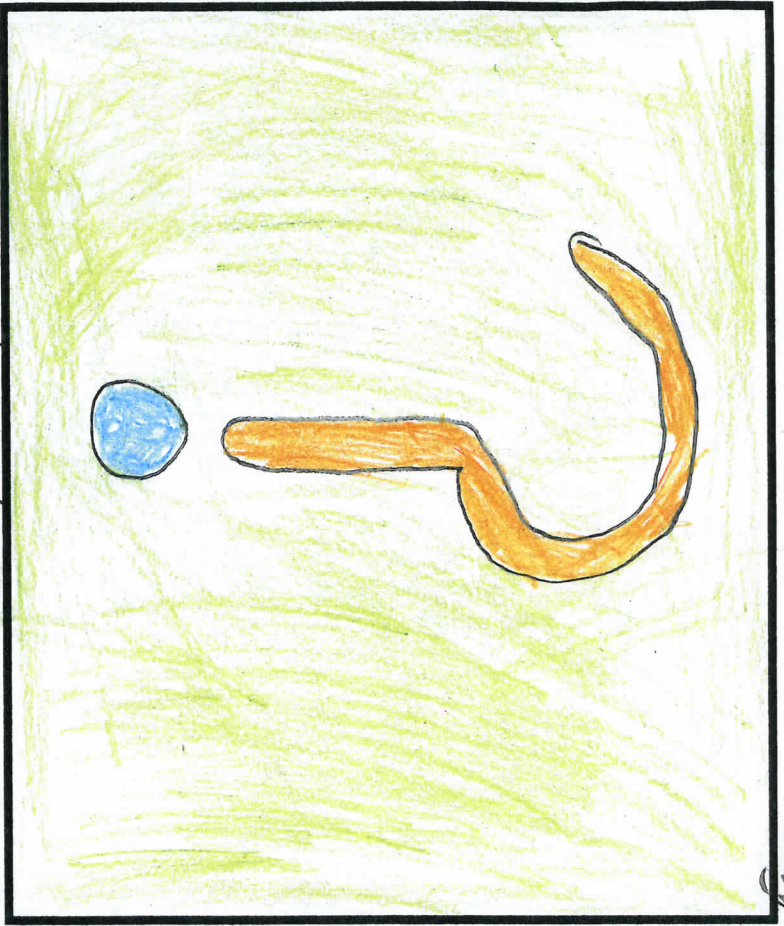
The force of the plate was so strong and powerful that it caused an earthquake that measured "9" on the Richter scale (A power of it can be). First it sent out P waves which warned people that a major earthquake was on its way. Then it sent out S waves which caused all the destruction. The plates also created a tsunami (10 actually) 24 minutes after the shock. They were 18m apart and traveled at 200 km/h when at sea.



185 miles away Tokyo could also feel the force of the earthquake. The building in Tokyo have been designed to wobble with the earthquake but not fall down. (Imagine what it would be like if you were inside the building!!)



The Fukushima power plant was one of many buildings to be hit by the earthquake. The earthquake made the power plant go into safety mode but when the tsunami hit the safety mode was destroyed and the nuclear plant shut down and exploded. The radiation has contaminated food and water. Radiation has even been detected in the UK (a harmless amount though)



Other Facts

- 10,000 dead
- 20,000 injured
- 250,000 homeless
- Tsunami 17 metres high
- There have been 700 aftershocks
- On average Japan experiences 1500 earthquakes a year
- The 10th tsunami wave was 3hrs 30mins after the earthquake.

