



Title: “It Happened in My Lifetime” (Part B)

Preview of Main Idea: Students will apply critical thinking skills to write a letter from the perspective of a historical figure to a community who has just been devastated by an Offshore Geohazard. Students are given the "Geohazard Event Timeline," they must choose one of the events from the timeline and do research to find a historical figure who was alive when the event took place. (If the students completed Lesson A prior to this lesson, they should be urged to use the *historical figure* and *event* that they chose from that lesson.)

Students are expected to learn how *historical events* can tie together *communities* and *important figures* despite geography.

Connection with Curriculum: Social Studies, Language Arts, History

Teaching Level: Grades 4-7

(This lesson can be modified for secondary students by including more detail.)

Standards Taught: Letter Composition, Organizing Information and Ideas, Writing for Audience and Purpose, Historical Viewpoints and Perspectives, Historical Change and Continuity, Impact of the Environment on Society.

Materials: “Geohazard Event Timeline”, Lesson Plan (B) Writing Prompt, encyclopedias or internet, History textbook (optional)

Objectives: Critical thinking in line with a general concern for the well being of world communities, development of letter writing and communication skills, understanding the significance of natural disasters.

Opening the Lesson: Lesson should be preceded by either: Lesson A, or an educational video or lecture (ie: see below) on background of Offshore Geohazards.

- Offshore Geohazards are events that can occur from sudden changes in the earth under the ocean. Common causes are by earthquakes and landslides occurring far from the shore. These events can produce massive waves that devastate coastal communities. The recurrence of these events is infrequent, however they have affected locations in all parts of the world throughout history, similar to other natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes and floods.

- Students should be given the following writing prompt on an overhead transparency or on the blackboard.

“In formal “Letter Format” write a 1-2 page letter from the historical figure of your choice to the local community who was affected by the offshore geohazard of your choice from the timeline. Think about what your figure can offer to this community in terms of comfort and relief after their devastation? Keep in mind that some who may be reading your letter have lost their homes, their belongings and even loved ones, as much of the community was washed out to sea.”

Hint: The letter should be dated shortly after the event took place.

Developing the Lesson: Students should work alone on this writing assignment. They can write on blank or loose-leaf paper to be handed in, or in a student composition book if the class practices regular journal entry.

- Students should identify their historical figure to the community.
- They should then determine what significant power/popularity their figure held and write about how they will use this to help the community.
- Students should address the needs of all members of the community, including men, women, and children, (ie: sending toys, food, clothing)

Concluding the Lesson: Letters can be collected and graded for level of effort and creativity in content, formatting, grammar, spelling, neatness, and use of vocabulary. After the lesson, students can share their ideas in a round circle class discussion.