

“DISASTER INVESTIGATORS”

Section

This activity aims to teach students about different types of disasters and how to mitigate their effects. Students work in groups to develop solutions, design disaster-specific products, and share their ideas with the class to earn a “Disaster Awareness Expert” certificate. The activity aims to develop students' problem-solving, collaboration, and presentation skills.

Lesson

Social Studies

Grade

4

Learning Objectives

Students will share the product they created regarding what can be done to reduce the effects of disasters.

Duration

2 Lesson (80 minutes)

Required Materials

Visuals showing types of disasters
Colored cardboard, crayons, scissors, glue, sticky paper, etc.
Task cards
Evaluation sheet
Participation certificate template

Preparation and Implementation

Plan group activities and prepare the necessary materials in advance.
Prepare visual materials explaining the types of disasters.
Make copies of the handouts and worksheets in sufficient quantities.

PROCESS

1 INTRODUCTION (10 Minutes)

- Prepare a presentation showing students images of different natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, fires, landslides, avalanches, droughts, forest fires, etc.).
- After introducing each disaster, ask the class questions similar to the following to raise awareness about disasters.
 - “What do you think might have happened in this disaster?”
 - “How might people have been affected by this situation?”

2 DISCUSSION (15 Minutes)

WORKSHEET: Read the reading passage to the class and then have them discuss the answers to the questions.

3 IMPLEMENTATION (55 Minutes)

Write “Disaster Hunters on Duty!” on the board and divide the class into groups of 3-5 students.

Assign each group a type of disaster (earthquake, flood, fire, landslide, avalanche, drought, forest fire, etc.) and ask them to work according to the instructions on the task card below.

Task Card:

- ✓ What problems do people face in this disaster?
- ✓ What can be done to prevent these problems?
- ✓ What solution/product can we suggest for this issue?

Students turn their solution ideas into a product in the form of a drawing, cartoon, poem, poster, brochure, short text on cardboard, etc.

Organize a “Disaster Prevention Inventions Exhibition.” At the exhibition:

- Each group presents their product to the class.
 - During the presentation, they pay attention to the following:
 - Introducing the disaster
 - Explaining the effects of the disaster
 - Describing their own solution proposals

To help students express their ideas and develop their problem-solving skills, they listen to other students and try to answer the following question.

“Which suggestion did you like the most, and why?”

The answers are written on small notes and attached to the finished product, which is then displayed.

What did we learn?

Students viewing the exhibition are given a mini worksheet with the following questions.

1. Which disaster affected you the most?
2. What can be done to reduce the damage caused by this disaster?
3. Which of your classmates' ideas did you like, and why?
4. What precautions can you take at home or at school?

Once all students have completed the activity, they are awarded a fun **participation certificate** titled “Disaster Awareness Expert.”

EVALUATION

1

WORKSHEET: Evaluate the answers given to the reading passage and your observations during product development using the ADDITIONAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SCALE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

You can relate the lesson to visual arts, Turkish, foreign languages, and science.

2

You can support products prepared with content obtained from institutions such as AFAD, AFADEM, and Kızılay.

3

You can use the Worksheet and Appendix as a tool for evaluating student performance.

WORKSHEET

READING PASSAGE

Mehmet and the Disaster Diary

Mehmet was a student who loved social studies class. One day, his teacher brought a large map to class and said,

“Children, today we will talk about natural disasters in Turkey!”

Mehmet immediately thought of his grandfather, who had experienced an earthquake years ago. After class, he ran home and went to his grandfather.

“Grandpa, you've been through an earthquake. Can you tell me about it?” he asked.

His grandfather nodded slightly and began to tell him:

“Yes, son, we experienced major earthquakes in 1999 and 2023. Houses were destroyed, and people were scared. But thanks to solidarity, many people were saved.”

That evening, Mehmet wrote in his diary:

“Today I learned how powerful an earthquake can be, but also how powerful people can be when they work together.”

The following week, the teacher showed a video in class. The video was about a flood disaster. The river had overflowed, and houses were submerged in water.

The teacher asked, “In which regions of Turkey do floods occur?”

Mehmet raised his hand: “It happens a lot in the Black Sea, teacher! It rains too much.”

That evening, Mehmet wrote the following in his diary:

“When floodwaters enter homes, everything is damaged. But this can be prevented if water channels are built.”

The following week, the teacher brought up the topic of forest fires. Mehmet spoke sadly: “There was a fire in Antalya last summer. We saw it on the news. The trees were burned and the animals fled.”

The teacher nodded:

“Yes, children, it is essential not to light fires in the forest or throw glass bottles!”

Mehmet's diary continued to fill up. Finally, the teacher talked about landslides and avalanches. In a landslide, the ground shifts, while in an avalanche, masses of snow slide downhill.

Mehmet smiled and wrote in his diary:

“If we understand nature and do not harm it, we will experience fewer disasters.”

QUESTIONS

1. Based on what Mehmet wrote in his diary, what kind of person do you think he is when it comes to disasters? Why?
2. Which of the natural disasters mentioned in the story affected you the most? Why did you choose this disaster?
3. If you were in Mehmet's place, which disaster would you want to research? What questions would you ask?
4. What can be done in your community to reduce the damage caused by disasters?
5. How does not harming nature reduce the impact of disasters?

**STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SCALE
(GRADING RUBRIC)**

Evaluation Criteria	4 (Excellent)	3 (Good)	2 (Needs Improvement)	1 (Insufficient)	POINT
<i>Understanding and Responding to Reading Passages</i>	Answered all questions completely and meaningfully.	Answered most questions correctly.	Some questions were answered incompletely or superficially.	Had difficulty answering questions.	
<i>Participation in Group Work</i>	Played an active role, contributed ideas, and contributed to cooperation.	Participated mostly, fulfilled duties.	Participated occasionally, needed guidance.	Remained passive, limited contribution.	
<i>Quality of Prepared Product</i>	Provided a creative, thoughtful, relevant, and understandable product.	Provided a relevant and understandable product.	Provided a partially understandable product with shortcomings.	The product was irrelevant, incomplete, or careless.	
<i>Attention and Participation During Exhibition</i>	Carefully examined all the products and praised his friends.	Examined the products and showed interest.	Showed no interest in some products.	Paid no attention to the exhibition and was indifferent.	
<i>Ability to Learn and Interpret New Information</i>	Clearly and creatively expressed what they learned about disasters.	Explained what they learned with examples.	Expressed some information but was weak in commentary.	Had difficulty understanding new information.	
<i>Ability to Present Own Product (if applicable)</i>	Presented the product in an open, confident, and effective manner.	Presented the product in a generally understandable manner.	Was hesitant in the presentation; explanations were incomplete.	Did not give a presentation, or it was very weak.	