

Taranaki Blowout: Senior unit plan

Years:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 7-13 	
Levels:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels 3-6 	
Approximate duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-6 weeks 	
Values:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community and participation Innovation, inquiry and curiosity 	
Key competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing self Thinking Participating and contributing Relating to others Using language, symbols and texts 	
Learning areas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Physical Education 	Safety Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Studies 	Conceptual strands: Identity, Culture and Organisation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English 	Listening, Reading and Viewing Speaking, Writing, and Presenting

Unit overview

Taranaki Blowout Week 1 Monday 13 September	Taranaki Blowout Week 2 Monday 20 September	Taranaki Blowout Week 5 Monday 11 October	Taranaki Blowout Week 6 Monday 18 October
Section A: Reducing the risk – making ourselves aware	Section B: Let's get ready – and stay prepared	Section C: Time to practice – responding the right way	Section D: Be a survivor – recovery from disasters
Activity 1: What is a disaster? (Health and Physical Education, Science, English) <i>Identify a variety of disasters and become more aware of how people can prepare for them.</i>	Activity 1: Emergency survival items (Health and Physical Education) <i>Identify the emergency survival items required at school and at home. Explain their purpose.</i>	Activity 1: Practise scenarios (Health and Physical Education) <i>Practise a range of emergency drills at school and at home using different scenarios.</i>	Activity 1: Class visit (Social Sciences) <i>Investigate how the local civil defence emergency management office prepares for and responds to a disaster.</i>
Activity 2: What happens where? (Social Sciences, Science, English) <i>Investigate disasters that have happened locally, discuss the effects and predict what is likely to affect the area in the future.</i>	Activity 2: Emergency plans (Health and Physical Education) <i>Review and become familiar with the school's emergency response procedures and create a home emergency plan with families.</i>	Activity 2: Encourage others to practise (Health and Physical Education) <i>Take action to encourage others to practise emergency drills and response procedures.</i>	Activity 2: After a disaster (Health and Physical Education, Social Sciences) <i>Research and summarise safe practices after a disaster.</i>
Activity 3: Identify the effects of a disaster (Social Sciences, English) <i>Research a disaster, identify the effect on the community and discuss how individuals can take responsibility.</i>	Activity 3: Identify special needs (Health and Physical Education) <i>Identify the special needs of members of the community in a disaster. Discuss how to help.</i>		

Activity 4: Helping (Social Sciences) <i>Identify different groups of people who help during a disaster and describe their roles and functions. Discuss and practise what they could do to help.</i>			
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Source: Unit overview: senior (pages 37-48 of *What's the Plan Stan?*)

Notes:

- 1) Only the activities relevant to Taranaki Blowout are included in this plan.
- 2) The templates referred to in the plan are included at the end of this plan.

Section A: Reducing the risk – making ourselves aware

Activity 1: What is a disaster?

Resources:

- www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz
- CD-Rom from the *What's the Plan Stan?* teaching resource
- *The Sleeper Wakes* by David Hill.

a) Discuss what we know about hazards:

- at home
- at school
- beyond the school gates.

What is the difference between everyday hazards and potential hazards?

Can we remove all of the everyday hazards?

Can we remove all of the potential hazards?

b) Read the novel *The Sleeper Wakes*.

c) Explore books, photo cards, the CD-Rom and internet to gather information to define disasters. Useful books to explore are the Kevin Boon Series *Events in New Zealand History* and *Other resources* (Appendix I).

- *The White Island Eruption*
- *The Tangiwai Rail Disaster*

d) Use the Volcano fact sheet (Appendix II) to help students understand what to do before, during and after an eruption. Choose the learning activities that best suit the needs of your class. You could use a workstation approach to these activities, or assign individual disasters to groups that report their findings back to the class. Homework is included so parents and families can also participate.

Volcano activities

1. Discuss with class:
 - What is a volcano?
 - Are there any volcanoes near where we live?
 - What should we do in a volcanic eruption?
 - What are the dangers of volcanic eruptions?
 - What is a lahar?
2. Divide the class into groups. They imagine they are news teams covering an eruption. They produce a newspaper page, or radio or television broadcast about an imaginary evacuation from a volcanic eruption. They must include advice on what to do before, during and after an eruption.
3. Allow students to present their articles or programmes.

Volcano homework sheet

1. Become an investigative reporter. Write a newspaper article about the readiness of your house for an eruption. For example, have you got a household emergency plan and emergency survival items?
2. Interview an adult at home as part of your article. You may want to tape or video it. Find out if they are prepared for a volcanic eruption or emergency evacuation.

Section A - Activity 2: What happens where?

Resources:

- Template 1: *Map of New Zealand*
 - Template 2: *Plus, minus and interesting (PMI) chart*
 - *What's the Plan Stan* CD-Rom or www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz
- a) Using Template 1: *Map of New Zealand*, ask students to indicate where they think volcanic activity has occurred.
 - b) Students use books, the CD-Rom or www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz to find out what volcanic activity has happened in New Zealand, and where. They could note disasters that have happened in their local community or are most likely to affect the area in the future.
 - c) Students complete Template 2: *Plus, minus and interesting (PMI) chart* to sort the information they have found out as 'plus', 'minus' or 'interesting'.

Or they could use a T-chart to compare their first map with the information they have found. These could be taken home to share with families.

Section A - Activity 3: Identify the effects of a disaster

Resources:

- www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz
 - CD-Rom from the *What's the Plan Stan?* teaching resource
 - Template 3: *Identifying the effects of a disaster*
- a) Students work in groups to identify the effects of a disaster and understand some of the complexities involved in responding to a disaster. Each group chooses a disaster and imagines they are responsible for younger family members or pets. Ask questions like:
- How can this disaster happen?
 - What dangerous things or damage might happen?
 - What could we do to help our families or siblings?
- b) Groups use resources such as books, the CD-Rom, or www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz to complete Template 3: *Identifying the effects of a disaster*.
- c) Groups could present their findings to the class or other groups.

Section A - Activity 4: Helping

- a) Visit the Taranaki Emergency Management Office (TEMO). Contact the Taranaki Education Officer Kevin Archer to arrange a visit. Students will be involved in a role playing exercise to show how TEMO would operate in an emergency. Visit the Communications Room and watch a short DVD showing some recent disasters including the 1997 Mt Ruapehu eruption.
- b) Guest speakers could include the Taranaki Education Officer Kevin Archer to talk to your students about our volcano and/or show examples of what your Home Emergency Kit should have in it.
- c) Other speakers could include representatives from police, fire, Red Cross, Order of St John, Search and Rescue or helicopter rescue services. They could work with students to demonstrate what they might do in a disaster, or teach the students procedures for helping others, such as first aid.
- d) Discuss the ways students could help others in a disaster. For example, they could help younger students, the elderly, people with special needs, and pets.

Section B: Let's get ready – and stay prepared

Activity 1: Emergency survival items

Resources:

- www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz
 - CD-Rom from the *What's the Plan Stan?* teaching resource
 - Template 4: *Survival items 'cut and stick' sheet*
 - Template 5: *Emergency survival items at home*
- a) Discuss the possibility of having to stay at home without help for up to three days or more in the event of a disaster. Arrange a selection of items, including both necessary emergency items and things that would not be needed. Ask students to decide which items could be emergency survival items and why.
- a) In pairs, ask students to brainstorm all the emergency survival items they might need in a disaster. Get them to draw and label the items. Ask questions such as:
- What items do you think you need and why?
 - Why do you think you need these items?
 - Where do you think you should keep them?
 - How many should you have?
- b) Make an emergency kit for the classroom. Encourage the students to explore the kit, reviewing what and how things work. Practise tuning radios, using tin openers, putting batteries in a torch, and become familiar with the civil defence siren 'sting' alert' on the CD-Rom.

Homework: Survival items

Students take home Template 5: *Survival items 'cut and stick' sheet* and tick the items they have and can easily find at home. Send a letter to their parents or caregivers with discussion points and a checklist of emergency survival items.

Useful templates

Template 4: *Survival item 'cut and stick' sheet*

Template 5: *Emergency survival items at home*

Section B - Activity 2: Emergency plans

Resources:

- School evacuation plans and emergency response procedures
- Template 2: *Plus, minus and interesting (PMI) chart*

- a) In groups, students review the school's relevant evacuation plans and emergency response procedures. They then note the positive, minus and interesting points related to the plans on Template 5: *Plus, minus and interesting (PMI) chart*.

Discuss these as a class to ensure that everyone knows what to do in the event of a disaster.

Check out your school's emergency procedures. There may be different plans for different disasters, and for inside and outside the classroom.

- b) Buddy up with a younger class in the school or at a local primary school. Show them what they need to do in a disaster, according to the school's emergency planning.
- c) Make a book for junior school students, explaining what to do before, during and after a particular type of disaster at school.
- d) Make a PowerPoint of evacuation plans and emergency procedures to be used for new students.

Extra for more able students: Go to a local rest home, library, theatre or similar venue and gather information to create a PowerPoint showing their evacuation plan and emergency procedures.

Section B - Activity 3: Identify special needs

Resources:

- Questionnaire and analysis materials and tools
- a) Students prepare a questionnaire or checklist for people in their neighbourhood, or their extended family, to find out how prepared they are for a volcanic eruption or other disasters and what special needs they would have (for example, elderly, people with special needs, pets, farm animals).

Homework: Questionnaire

Students survey at least three neighbours or extended family using their questionnaire or checklist to find out how prepared they are for a volcanic eruption or other disasters and what special needs they would have.

- b) Analyse and graph these results at school. Students could suggest ways to help others to be better prepared and to deal with any special needs they would have in a volcanic eruption or other disaster. Allow students time to implement these suggestions.

Section C: Time to practice – responding the right way

Activity 1: Practise scenarios

Resources:

- Template 6: *What if cards*
- a) Practise a range of emergency drills as a class or whole school. Discuss scenarios such as what to do:
- at lunchtime or during breaks
 - if travelling to and from school
 - if the teacher isn't at school and there is a reliever.
- b) Using Template 6: *What if cards*, students work in small groups and act out what they could do in different situations. The www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz website and CD-Rom contain a list of discussion points to consider when using these cards. Give each group different scenarios and ask them to discuss and share these with their peers, other students or their families.

Homework: What if?

Students make up their own *What if cards* or design a game involving the *What if cards*.

Useful template

Template 1: *What if cards*

Section C - Activity 2: Encourage others to practise

Resources:

- Various, according to chosen activity
 - Template 7: *Letter to parents – household emergency plan*
- a) Brainstorm ways for students to encourage others to practise emergency drills and response procedures. For example:
- Design posters for display around the school that show what to do in different disasters, or create a webpage for the school website.
 - Make a play, rap, song or dance that demonstrates the importance of practising emergency drills.
 - Design picture information cards for ESOL students and students with special needs.

- Work with teachers to organise emergency drill practices. For example, students could suggest holding an emergency evacuation practice with younger students, or while having school assembly.

Homework: Household emergency plan

Students create or review their household emergency plan with their families. Together they brainstorm situations when they may need to leave their house and when it may be safer to stay indoors. For example, it might be safer to stay indoors during a big storm but what about during a flood? Encourage students to come up with their own plan and to add any details they think are necessary while keeping it simple. Send a letter to their parents or caregivers with suggestions for discussion and a template for the plan.

Useful templates

Template 7: *Letter to parents - household emergency plan*

Section D: Be a survivor – recovery from disasters

Activity 1: Class visit

Resources:

- Civil defence emergency management staff at your local council or other emergency services
- a) Arrange a visit to a variety of places or have someone come and visit your class or school. Some suggestions are:
- The Taranaki Emergency Management Office at Robe Street New Plymouth. Contact the Taranaki Regional Council Education Officer Kevin Archer to arrange.
 - police search and rescue team
 - mountain clubs
 - fire service
 - ambulance
 - army.

The students may be able to come up with some suggestions for places they might like to visit.

- b) Students plan what they want to find out during the visit. For example:
- Who takes over or helps during a disaster?
 - When do they take over?
 - Who and what are their roles?
 - Who and what is civil defence and what is their role?
- c) Students could undertake practical activities, such as first aid; making shelters; cooking on a primus, gas cooker or barbecue (with adult supervision).

Section D - Activity 2: After a disaster

Resources:

- Template 8: *Health rules after disasters*
- a) Students research the 'dos and don'ts' for immediately after a disaster. Template 8: *Health rules after disasters* is useful for this.
- b) Students produce a pamphlet outlining safe practices such as:
- preparing drinking water
 - sewage disposal
 - what do we eat first and how much

- identifying ongoing hazards after the event.

Homework: Pamphlets

Students finish these pamphlets for homework and share them with their families.

Assessment

Students' success criteria can be used as a form of formative or summative assessment. Students could self or peer assess against the set criteria. This can be done verbally or with charts as shown in the examples below.

Learning area: Health and Physical Activity

Personal Health and Physical Development

Learning intention: *Students will identify and list a range of disasters and explain how to respond in a variety of situations.*

Success criteria	Continuum	Comment
I can list a range of disasters.	_____ 0 1 2 3 4 5	
I can explain what I would do if there was a disaster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at school • at home • when I'm on holiday • while going to or from school. 	_____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5	
I have discussed a household emergency plan with my family.	_____ 0 1 2 3 4 5	
I have taken action to practise the school's emergency procedures and inform others of these plans.	_____ 0 1 2 3 4 5	

Healthy Communities and Environments

Learning intention: *Students will review the school's relevant response procedures and emergency evacuation plans and take action to enhance their effectiveness.*

Students critique the school's relevant evacuation and emergency response plans (eg using a PMI). They can present a case for improvements to a specific plan to enhance its effectiveness.

Healthy Communities and Environments

Learning intention: *Students will describe their local community's needs in the event of a disaster and take action for the care and safety of people in their family and community.*

Students prepare a chart, checklist or report identifying how specific groups in the local community might prepare for and respond to a disaster. Include a summary of the action they have taken to help others prepare. The following chart could be used:

What help do members of our local community need in the event of a disaster?	
Examples	
What action have you taken to help others prepare for a disaster?	
Name/group	Action/s taken

Appendix I

Other resources

Civil defence emergency management resources

A wide range of material is available from the Taranaki Emergency Management Office (ph 06 758 1110) or the Taranaki Regional Council Education Officer Kevin Archer (ph 06 765 7127) or have a look on the Council website www.trc.govt.nz. Links to resources, as well as to your nearest council, are available on www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz.

Non-fiction resources

Ansell, R 1996, *Caught in the Crunch: Earthquakes and Volcanoes in New Zealand*, Harper Collins, Auckland.

Ganeri, A 1999, *Violent Volcanoes*, Horrible Geography, Scholastic Children's Books, UK.

Novels

These novels are suitable for teacher reading, shared reading or novel study.

Hill, D 2003, *My Story – Journey to Tangiwai. The Diary of Peter Cotterill*, Scholastic, Auckland.

When Peter Cotterill begins his diary in 1953, little does he realise that something is happening elsewhere in New Zealand that is going to have a huge impact on his life.

Hill, D 2001, *The Sleeper Wakes*, Puffin, Auckland.

Mount Taranaki erupts after 250 years.

Appendix II

Fact sheet : Volcanoes

What is a volcano?

New Zealand is situated on the 'Ring of Fire', a geographic belt encircling the Pacific Ocean and containing about 90% of the earth's volcanoes. There are six active volcanic regions in New Zealand, five in the North Island and one in the northern offshore islands.

Volcanoes come in different shapes and sizes. There are three main types found in New Zealand:

- *cone* volcanoes such as Mounts Ruapehu, Taranaki and Ngauruhoe
- volcanic *fields* such as the ones found in the Auckland area
- *calderas* – large depressions formed by huge explosions, such as Lakes Taupo and Rotorua.

Volcanoes erupt when pressure builds up inside the earth and forces molten rock (magma) towards the surface. Volcanoes usually have short active periods, separated by longer dormant periods. Even extinct volcanoes are capable of coming to life again.

The type of eruption varies according to the amount of dissolved gases in the magma (which determines the explosiveness) and the silica content (which determines the runniness). Some eruptions are explosive, blowing out great volumes of rocks and molten material. Other volcanoes erupt in flows, pouring out clouds of hot gas mixed with small particles, or streams of liquid lava.

Those living in volcanic regions are at risk from ash, debris and lava flows. For example, the eruption of Mount Tarawera in 1886 killed an estimated 153 people. If there is a crater lake or torrential rain, water can mix with volcanic debris to form a swiftly moving avalanche of mud called a *lahar*, like the one that swept off Mount Ruapehu in 1953 and caused the deaths of 151 people in the Tangiwai railway disaster.

It is therefore important to know what to do before, during and after a volcanic eruption.

What do we do before a volcanic eruption?

- Know where active volcanoes are and whether they are likely to affect you.
- Talk with your family about an emergency plan and what you will need at home.
- Talk to your family about an evacuation plan – where to go and how to get there.

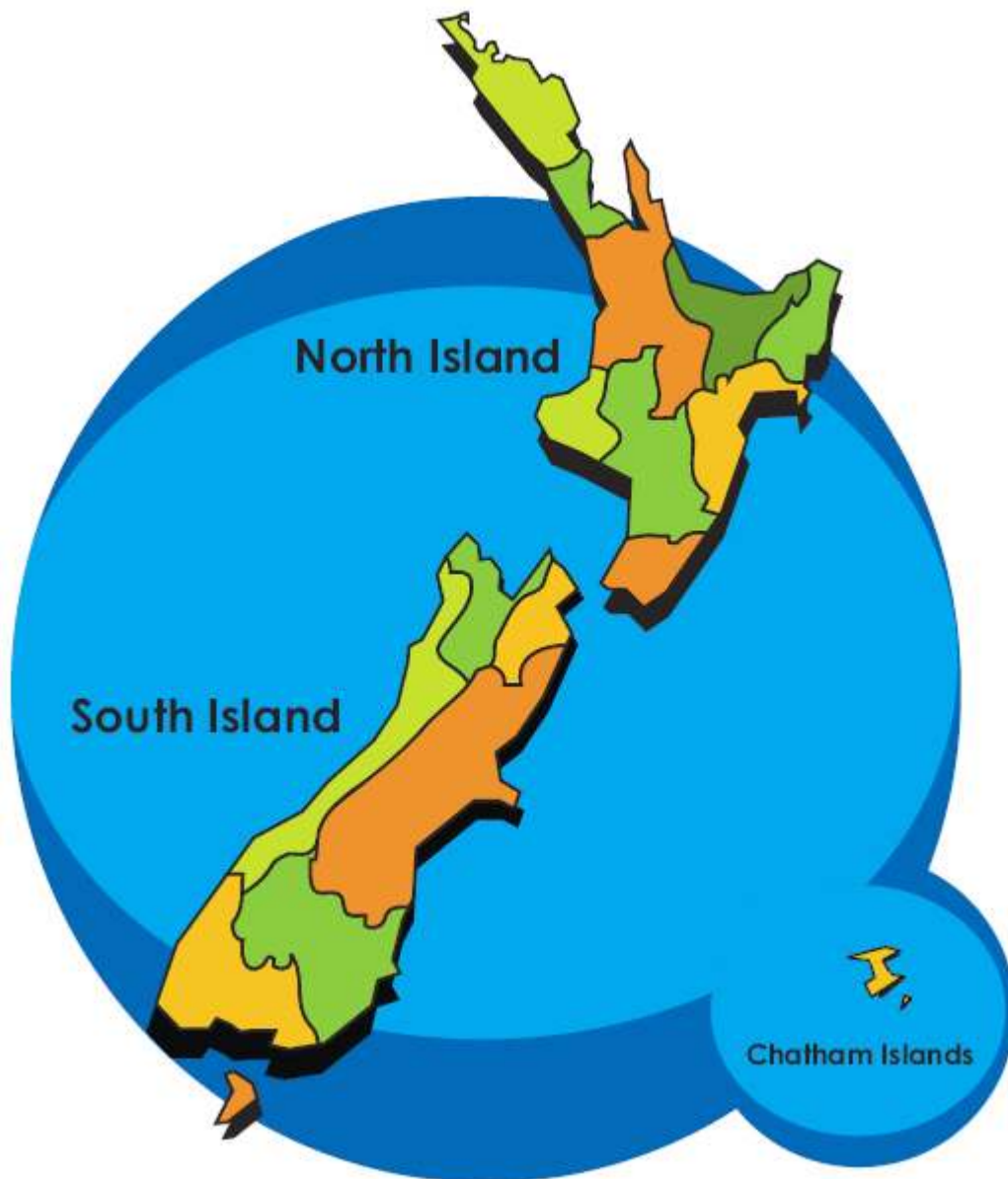
What do we do during a volcanic eruption?

- Listen to the radio for instructions.
- Stay indoors – keep windows and doors shut. Bring your pets indoors if you can.
- Save water in your bath and other containers at an early stage, as the water supply may become polluted.
- If outdoors, find shelter.
- If told to leave, cover your face and mouth, wear a dust mask and goggles if you can, and take your essential emergency survival items.
- Do not go sightseeing.
- Take your outer layer of clothing off before entering a building – volcanic ash is difficult to get rid of.

What do we do after a volcanic eruption?

- If in a safe place, stay put.
- Listen to the radio for information.
- Return home only when told.

Template 1: Map of New Zealand



Template 2: Plus, minus or interesting (PMI) chart

Students could use this chart to help compare their thinking from their first map to the information they found through research.

Plus	Minus	Interesting
<p>For example: <i>I knew where the fault lines in New Zealand were located.</i></p>	<p>For example: <i>I didn't know there had been any serious floods in New Zealand where people had to leave their homes.</i></p>	<p>For example: <i>One of the fault lines goes through Wellington where I live.</i></p>

Template 3: Identifying the effects of a disaster

The people in our group are:
The disaster we are responding to is:
How can this disaster happen?
What dangerous things or damage might happen at school or home?
What could we do to help our families and siblings?
Who else could we help and in what way?

-
-
-
-
-
-

Template 5: Emergency survival items at home

Dear Parents/Caregivers

We've asked your child to use this emergency survival items checklist to see which items they can find at home.

Please discuss this checklist with your child and encourage them to tick the items that they can find in the house. You might be able to help them to locate any items they can't find themselves.

You can download this checklist from www.getthru.govt.nz.

- **Household Emergency Checklist**
- **What you will need to get through.**
- **Your household**
 - Addresses:
 - Names and phone numbers (including mobiles):
 -
 - **Important phone numbers**
 - Police, Fire, Ambulance: dial 111
 - Civil Defence:
 - Other:
 -
 - **Your getaway kit**
 - Everyone in your house should have a small bag for a getaway kit, ready for evacuation. In addition to essential emergency items, this kit should include:
 -
 - **Family documents**
 - Birth and marriage certificates
 - Drivers' licences and passports
 - Insurance policies
 - Family photos
 -
 - **Personal items**
- **Emergency survival items**
 - If you prefer to keep your emergency survival items in the house for everyday use, make sure you know where to find them when a disaster occurs.
 -
 - **Food and water - enough for three days or more**
 - Bottled drinking water (at least three litres per person per day)
 - Water for washing and cooking
 - Non-perishable food (canned or dried)
 - Can opener
 - A primus or gas barbecue to cook on
 -
 - **Other emergency items**
 - Waterproof torches spare batteries
 - AM/FM radio
 - Spare batteries (check all batteries every three months)
 - First aid kit and essential medicines
 - Toilet paper and large rubbish bags for an emergency toilet
 - Face and dust masks
 - Pet supplies

- Towels, soap, toothbrush and sanitary items
- A change of clothes
- - Blankets or sleeping bags
 - Wind and rain proof clothing
 - Strong shoes for outdoors
 - Sun hats and sunscreen
 -
 - **Supplies for babies and small children**
 - Food, formula and drink
 - Change of clothing and nappies
 - Favourite toy or activity
 -
 - **Other supplies**
 - Hearing and sight aids, batteries
 - Mobility aids
 - Asthma and respiratory aids
 - Special food needs
 -
- For more information visit www.getthru.govt.nz

Template 6: *What if* cards

This template allows you to print out copies of the *What if* cards.

Suggested discussion points for the *What if* cards are included on www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz and on the CD-Rom.

You could use the *What if* cards as follows:

- Discuss each one in a group.
- Make a flowchart.
- Mime or act out in a group.
- Circle whisper, and ask for the outcome at end.
- Read out and jot down three main points.
- Speech → impromptu.
- Mime and guess the scenario.
- Write your own *What if* situations.
- Make a game such as Snakes and Ladders.

Volcanoes

<p>Scenario Card 1 - <i>On holiday</i> You are camping in a volcanic area. You notice smoke rising from a volcano in the distance.</p>	<p>Scenario Card 2 - <i>At home</i> You are listening to the radio when you hear that your community has to get ready to be evacuated within the next two hours.</p>
<p>Scenario Card 3 - <i>At school</i> You are told by your teacher that very shortly buses will arrive to collect everyone to be taken to a safer place due to sudden volcanic activity.</p>	<p>Scenario Card 4 - <i>On holiday</i> You are on a ski holiday with your family. You are skiing with some friends when you hear sirens sounding across the slopes. You look up, and there is a plume of smoke rising from the top of the mountain.</p>

Template 7: Letter to parents - household emergency plan

Dear Parents/Caregivers

As part of the *Taranaki Blowout* unit we are doing at school, we are talking to students about how to get ready for disasters at home as well as at school.

Please encourage your child to tell you more about the emergency evacuation and response procedures we've been practising at school recently. We would like students to find out what emergency procedures they have at home. It's a great opportunity for your family to get prepared!

Here's a household emergency plan you could use as a guide to emergency procedures, which you might like to display in a place that everyone in your family can see. We look forward to hearing more about your family's household emergency plan.

Many thanks

Household emergency plan

Complete this plan with all members of your household.

1. If we can't get home or contact each other we will meet or leave a message at:

2. The person responsible for collecting the children from school is:

Name: _____

Contact details: _____

Name (back-up): _____

Contact details: _____

3. The person responsible for checking the emergency survival items is:

4. The radio station (including AM/FM frequency) we will tune in to for civil defence information:

5. In a disaster we will remain in our home unless advised otherwise. We will need to be prepared to look after ourselves for up to three days or more. In a disaster we will:

- stop, think and respond
- get our emergency survival items
- listen to the radio for advice and information.

6. If we have to evacuate our home we will:

- take our getaway kit, and the essential emergency items
- turn off water, electricity and gas (always seek professional advice before reconnecting the gas supply).

7. Neighbours that may need our help or can help us:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

8. A plan of our house showing places to shelter e.g. in an earthquake, exits, assembly areas and where to turn off water, electricity and gas:

Plan of our house

Download this plan from www.getthru.govt.nz

Template 8: Health rules after disasters

Listen to your radio for advice and information on ways to help yourself and others recover from the disaster. If it has been a major event a number of everyday services such as water, sewage and rubbish collection may no longer be functioning. To avoid a health hazard follow these simple instructions.

Water supply

Until you are told otherwise, regard all water as contaminated and do not use it until it has been boiled for several minutes.

Use bottled water. Turn off the power and water to your hot water cylinder and use water sparingly.

Bottles and cans of drink are a good source of drinking fluids and will leave more water for cooking and hygiene.

You may be able to collect rainwater from the roof if it rains. Don't collect the initial water coming off the roof as it may contain foreign matter.

Sewage disposal

If the radio announcements say the sewage system is not working don't use the toilet. It may end up in someone else's home!

Until the system is fixed, dig a deep hole in the garden for a temporary toilet. Find something for a flyproof cover to go over it and you will probably want to make a privacy screen around it. An alternative is a caravan toilet or covered bucket in the garden or shed. You will still need the hole with the flyproof cover to empty these into.

Have disinfectant and water handy for washing hands. Remember to use the water sparingly though.

Rubbish collection

It may be some time before regular rubbish collection resumes. Bury biodegradable rubbish in the garden, or store it in well sealed bags in a place where animals can't get at them. Rubbish collection sites might be arranged - listen to your radio.

Food

If the electricity has failed, food stored in refrigerators and freezers will eventually spoil. You can make the most of your food supplies by using them in the correct order:

- Fresh foods and food from the refrigerator should be used first but open the fridge as few times as possible.
- Food from a cabinet freezer. Cook food as soon as it starts defrosting as cooked food lasts longer than uncooked food.

- Food from a chest freezer - putting blankets over this type of freezer can help keep food colder for longer.
- Canned and packet foods should be kept until last.

Hygiene becomes very important when preparing food after an emergency. Remember to ensure that water used in preparing and cooking food has been boiled for several minutes to make it safe. Always wash your hands before preparing food - if water is in short supply keep some in a bowl with disinfectant.

If using a barbeque or camping stove to cook food, use it outside to avoid harmful fumes in the house or accidental fire - the ambulance and fire services may be unable to respond if you have an accident.

As soon as possible after an emergency, check on the state of your garden chemicals, fuel and cleaning products in the house, garage and shed. Some of these can be dangerous to your health if spilled and mixed. If there has been a spill, use rubber gloves to handle containers and dispose of them into separate plastic bags. If fumes are present it may be best to seek help to deal with the situation.

- *“ You can get more information about this from your local council. Links can be found at www.getthru.govt.nz”.*