

The Story

The first sign was a low rumble, so faint that I thought it was thunder. Then, without warning, the ground shuddered. The classroom lights flickered and a sharp crack split the air. Chairs scraped as we hurried under our desks, the floor jolting again, harder this time.

It didn't last long, but when the shaking stopped, nothing felt the same. Outside, a cloud of dust hung over the playground and a section of the old brick wall had crumbled into a pile of rubble. The school bell didn't ring. Instead, our teachers guided us to the field, where we waited while emergency vehicles could be heard in the distance.

I glanced towards the town centre. A thin plume of smoke was rising beyond the station, and the usually busy road was silent. Mr Carter spoke calmly, but I noticed the tight look on his face as he checked his phone again. We didn't know yet how much damage there was, but one thing was clear — this wasn't just a small tremor.



Inference Questions

1 **What can we infer about the narrator's initial reaction to the first rumble?**

- **A** They immediately suspected an earthquake.
- **B** They were unsure what they had heard.
- **C** They were accustomed to loud, sudden noises.
- **D** They had been warned about a possible tremor.

2 **What does the detail that the school bell didn't ring most strongly suggest?**

- **A** The school's power had been affected.
- **B** The teachers wanted to keep everyone calm.
- **C** The earthquake had damaged the school bell.
- **D** There was an emergency procedure in place.

3 **How can we infer that the earthquake had a significant impact on the town?**

- **A** Emergency vehicles were heard in the distance.
- **B** A cloud of dust was hanging over the playground.
- **C** A plume of smoke was rising beyond the station.
- **D** The road to the town centre was unusually quiet.

4 **What can we infer about Mr Carter's feelings after the earthquake?**

- **A** He was confident that the damage was minor.
- **B** He was trying to remain calm despite being worried.
- **C** He was frustrated by the lack of information.
- **D** He was already planning the next steps for the school.

5 **Which inference is best supported by the text as a whole?**

- **A** The earthquake was more powerful than the narrator had expected.
- **B** The town centre had been completely destroyed.
- **C** The earthquake had been predicted earlier in the day.
- **D** The school building was no longer safe to use.



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