

KEY

Earthquakes are among the most destructive **(1) natural** disasters. They usually occur without any **(2) prior** warning and often result in a **(3) loss** of life and the collapse of buildings. In addition, earthquakes may cause **(4) devastating** landslides or create gigantic tidal waves. Such a disaster happened in 2004, when an earthquake **(5) off** the coast of Indonesia **(6) triggered** a massive tsunami that killed over 200,000 people.

Earthquakes **(7) occur** mostly where the earth's tectonic plates meet. Massive amounts of energy are **(8) released** when two plates push towards, pull apart from or slide past each other. **(9) Although** millions happen every year there are only a small number that **(10) can be felt** and very few that cause damage.

In many cases, an earthquake **(11) lasts** 30 to 60 seconds. There is hardly any time to **(12) escape** once the shaking starts. The brutal forces of an earthquake start a **(13) complex** chain reaction in a building's structure when it is shaken. A building's height, **(14) shape** and construction materials are significant **(15) factors** when it comes to its inhabitants surviving such a disaster.