Name _____ Number Right _____ **7**

Directions: *You have 4½ minutes to read the selection and answer the questions. Do not begin reading until your teacher gives the signal.*

Earthquakes

There are great forces inside the earth that push out on the earth's surface. Sometimes these forces become so great that they cause the rocks inside the surface to break apart and slip into a new position. Layers of the earth's surface slide over and under each other, causing the earth to vibrate, or "quake." Sometimes earthquakes damage property, and they can even cause injuries and deaths.

There have been several earthquakes in North America. Most of them have taken place in the western part of our country, but not all. In 1811–1812, three earthquakes shook Missouri which were so great that they could be felt in Boston, Massachusetts, and Denver, Colorado. One of the most destructive earthquakes in American history occurred in San Francisco in 1906. The earthquake and the fire which followed it killed almost 700 people. The entire city of San Francisco was left in ruins.

Some spots are more likely to have earthquakes than others. Earthquakes often happen along faults. A *fault* is a weak place or break in a layer of the earth's crust.

If an earthquake takes place under the ocean, it can cause huge *tsunamis* (Japanese for "huge waves"). These huge waves can be fifty feet high, and they can travel almost 600 miles per hour. An earthquake in Alaska in 1964 caused a tsunami which damaged cities in California and Japan.

Scientists are working hard to make equipment that can tell us when and where an earthquake is likely to occur. And in areas where there are faults, we are putting up buildings that are better able to withstand earthquakes.

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Circle the correct answer.

1. Earthquakes occur when ___?___.
   - **a.** layers of the earth's surface move
   - **b.** a huge wave crashes against rocks
   - **c.** rocks beneath the ground are hurled to the surface
   - **d.** a fault explodes into the air

2. **True** or **False:** Most of the U.S.'s major earthquakes occurred in the eastern part of our country.

3. A weak place or break in a layer of the earth's surface is called ___?___.
   - **a.** a tsunami
   - **b.** a fault
   - **c.** a vibration
   - **d.** an earthquake

4. The huge wave that can be caused by an earthquake taking place under the ocean is called ___?___.
   - **a.** a fault
   - **b.** a vibration
   - **c.** a tsunami
   - **d.** a whirlwind

5. The damage done in an earthquake often includes ___?___.
   - **a.** damage from strong winds
   - **b.** damage from tornadoes
   - **c.** damage from flooding
   - **d.** damage from fires

LIVEWORKSHEETS