

(The story by Nevin Thompson originally appeared on Global Voices, on April 16, 2016)

By some counts, as many as three large earthquakes have struck Japan's western island of Kyushu between April 14 and April 16. At least 37 people have died so far. Collapsed houses, flooding, landslides, destroyed roads, and bridges — plus the possibility of an imminent volcanic eruption — have combined to make this series of earthquakes Japan's worst natural disaster since the "Triple Disaster" of March, 2011.

Ogawa Hajime, a journalist working with Mainichi News, notes that there were actually three, not two — earthquakes. The latest quake occurred at 1:35 a.m. local time on Saturday, April 16. The epicentre was once again located in the city of Kumamoto, but damage was reported throughout the island, notably in the Kumamoto and Oita prefectures.

The village of Minami Aso, in eastern Kumamoto, at the foot of Mount Aso, Japan's largest active volcano, was hit particularly hard. The earthquake, combined with heavy rains, caused landslides that washed out roads. The town Uto, about 10 kilometres southwest of Kumamoto Prefecture, was also reported to be hard hit by the earthquake. Heavy rains over the weekend have also caused massive landslides that have wiped out roads, destroyed train tracks, and made life miserable for evacuees stuck out in the open.

There are also reports that dams have been weakened, raising fears of collapse and subsequent flooding of low-lying areas. While the number of casualties may likely rise, 37 people have been reported dead thus far, with hundreds more wounded and tens of thousands left homeless. Up to one hundred people were trapped under buildings. Even newer homes could not withstand the force of the tremors, and fire from ruptured gas lines engulfed many communities.

Tokyo Metropolitan University researcher Hidenori Watanabe, who recently helped launch an innovative mapping tool that examined the aftermath of the 2011 Tohoku Tsunami, used another tool to examine the scale of the earthquakes occurring in northern Kyushu at this time. The second of the three quakes, which occurred at 12:03 a.m. local time on Friday, April 15, was regarded to be the "main quake". The third quake that occurred early in the morning of April 16 caught everyone off guard. Some experts have noted that there is no possible way to state when a "main" earthquake has occurred. For now, many people in Japan are uneasily considering the possibility of whether or not Mount Aso, Japan's largest active volcano, located right in the middle of the earthquake zone, will erupt.

1. The following statement which is INCORRECT based on the passage above is ...
 - A. All of the earthquakes occurred on different days.
 - B. The total number of death toll would remain thirty-seven.
 - C. The earthquakes hitting Japan's western island of Kyushu were successive.
 - D. Heavy rains played a significant role in roads' destruction in Minami Aso and Uto.
 - E. The effect of the earthquakes was suffered by those in the entire island of Kyushu.
2. Paragraph 3 mainly discusses
 - A. the heavy rains in two areas in Japan
 - B. the earthquakes hitting many areas in Japan
 - C. the devastation in two different affected areas
 - D. the different condition between Minami Aso and Uto
 - E. the damage of all areas in Japan hit by the earthquake
3. The word 'evacuees' in the 3rd paragraph has similar meaning as...
 - A. Helps
 - B. Saves
 - C. Shelter
 - D. Refugees
 - E. Refuse
4. What had Ogawa Hajime found when the earthquake happened?
 - A. He found the earthquake was devastating in Kumamoto and Tokyo.
 - B. The latest quake occurred at 1:30 a.m. local time on Saturday, April 19
 - C. Japan has been usual for happening earthquake but this one was different.
 - D. Ogawa trapped inside an abandon building so he saw everything.
 - E. He found that there were actually more than two earthquakes.

5. What is the main idea of the last paragraph?
- A. The prediction that there will be another mountain eruption in Japan.
 - B. The flashback of Tohoku tsunami.
 - C. A report from another researcher Hidenori Watanabe.
 - D. The third quake that occurred early in the morning of April 16 caught everyone on guard.
 - E. There was a raising fears of collapse and subsequent flooding of low-lying areas.

The idea that red means stop and green means go has impacted our lives in more ways than just traffic signals. We (5) ... from a young age that the colour red means danger and green means it is okay to move forward. But why were those particular colours chosen for traffic lights in the first place? For something we have to look at every day, why couldn't they have been prettier colours like magenta and turquoise?

Well, it is important (6) ... that before traffic lights for cars even became a thing, there were traffic signals for trains. (7) ..., railroad companies used red to mean stop, while to mean go, and green to mean caution. As you could imagine, train conductors ran into a few problems with white (8) ... go. For instance, one train conductor mistook a bright star (9) ... a white light and thought he was all clear. (10) ... incidents like that, railway companies eventually moved green meaning go, and it has been that way ever since.

6. A. Are taught
B. Were taught
C. Were being taught
D. Had been taught
E. Have been taught
7. A. To know
B. Knowing
C. To be known
D. Having known
E. To have known
8. A. First
B. First time
C. At first
D. In the first
E. At the first
9. A. Mean
B. Means
C. Meant
D. Meaning
E. That is meant
10. A. For
B. As
C. To
D. With
E. About