

TO tour
Feb 1, 2011, 10am - noon
San Marino 6th graders
Belle Philibosian



I gave a 15-minute presentation about how coral records tell us about earthquakes in the Sumatran Subduction Zone. I started by asking the kids what they knew about plate boundaries to gauge the right level to start. I also asked if they knew what corals were and if they'd seen them while snorkeling, then explained that corals are animal, vegetable, and mineral. I used the TO animations of the subduction seismic cycle and coral growth to illustrate these concepts, and shared some fun photos and stories from the field. I ended with a time-space diagram showing the megathrust rupture history, which was an advanced concept but I think I managed to build up to it. After that, I used the earthquake machine for about 5 minutes to demonstrate that earthquakes are unpredictable, that a larger stress buildup results in a larger earthquake, and that earthquakes can trigger each other (by daisy-chaining bricks.) The kids generally seemed interested by the presentation (asking good questions) and REALLY liked the earthquake machine. Next time, I would probably stick with the same format but try to do a better job of tying the concepts together, and give more explanation of why the research is important.