

4th grade class
Temple Academy, Hacienda La Puente USD
June 1, 2010
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Today June 1st Kristel and I visited a 4th grader class (9-10 year old students) in the Temple Academy, a public school in La Puente. Despite the name, which simply refers to the local main road, it is a public school. The class had 30 students, all of them latino american.

First, talking to the entire class, Kristel used a slide show presentation to introduced the various aspects of geology, then continued talking about mountain building, with an emphasis on the Himalayas. I then took over and gathered a smaller group around a map to introduce the notion of continental and oceanic plates, plate boundaries and earthquakes. The kids knew their world geography but were little familiar with the geology/geography of the ocean floor or the morphology of continents.

After that, I took the same group to the earthquake machine while Kristel gathered another around the map. As always, kids get very excited by the earthquake machine. I introduced the concept of friction, showed the effect of normal stress on rupture (size of rupture, time interval between earthquakes). Later, I used a slide show to describe what the scientific community expect the next big earthquake to be (using video from SCEC). I finished by showing the students the damage earthquakes can cause in a city, and how to protect oneself from them.

I left the geological map to the teachers and later gave them a little written test about earthquakes and mountain building.