What can one week of earthquake records tell us?

Student handout | Grades 9–12 | About 15 minutes

These numbers come from a fixed download of reviewed USGS catalog records for worldwide earthquakes from August 1 through August 7, 2026 (UTC). The first column counts records with magnitude 4.5 or greater. The second counts only records with magnitude 5.0 or greater. This is a selected catalog snapshot, not every earthquake on Earth.

UTC date	Magnitude 4.5+ records	Magnitude 5.0+ records
Aug 1	28	8
Aug 2	28	8
Aug 3	12	3
Aug 4	15	2
Aug 5	42	11
Aug 6	14	3
Aug 7	16	4

1. Which day has the most records under each selection rule? State the rule in your answer.

2. A headline says, “Earthquakes are getting more common.” Does this table establish that? Explain using the length of the window.

3. Why does the second column have fewer records? Did those other earthquakes disappear?

4. Name two things you would need to check before comparing this week with another year or region.

Source: USGS Comprehensive Earthquake Catalog (earthquake.usgs.gov/data/comcat/), frozen September 25, 2026. Your teacher has the full source notes and answer key. No account or personal information is needed.

Made by JR, founder of Telemetry, with AI help. Not classroom-tested; teachers should review it.

Teacher guide, data and slides: telemetry.sh/learn/earthquake-week