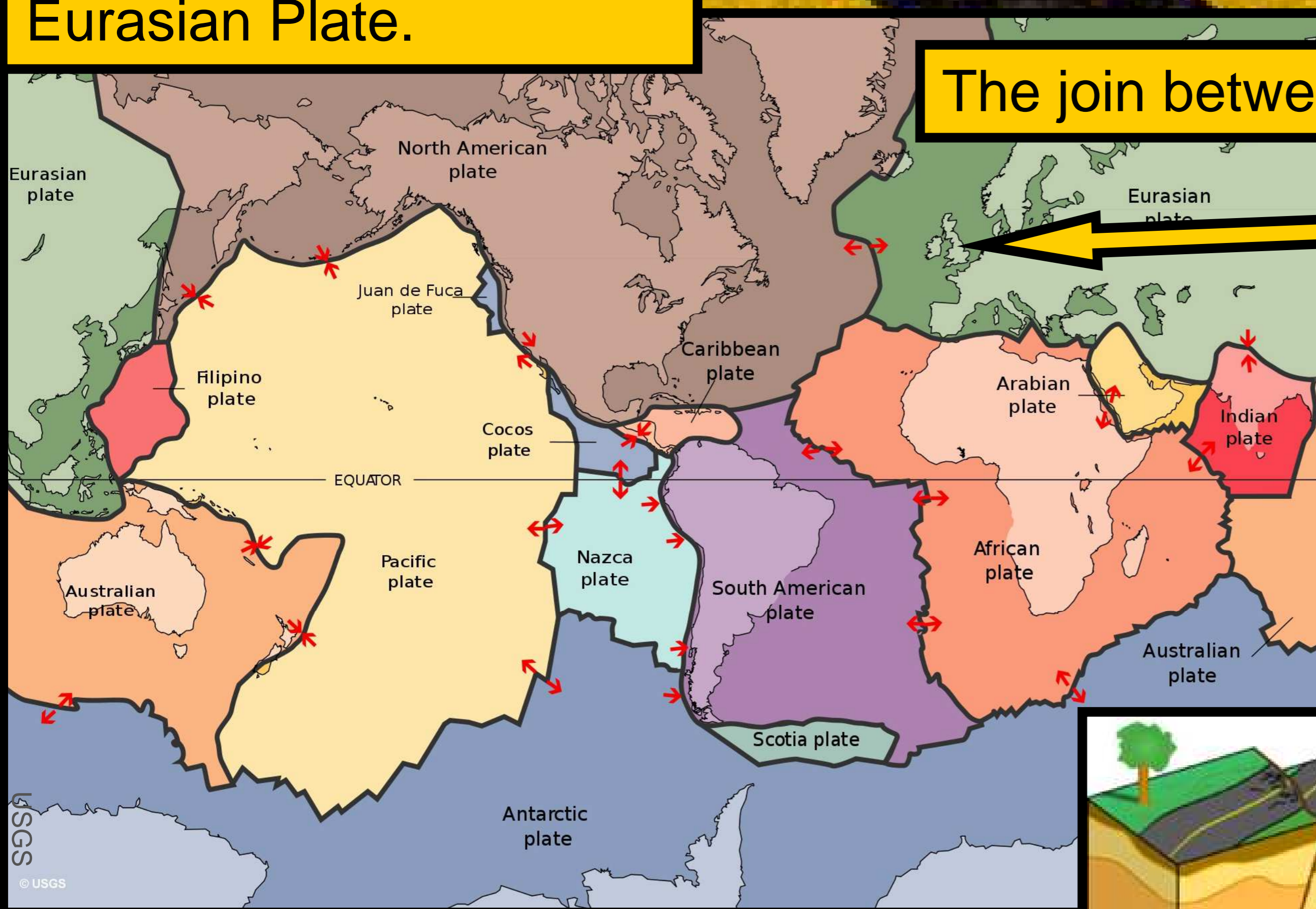


Earthquakes

The Earth's crust is made of pieces called tectonic plates. Britain is on the Eurasian Plate.

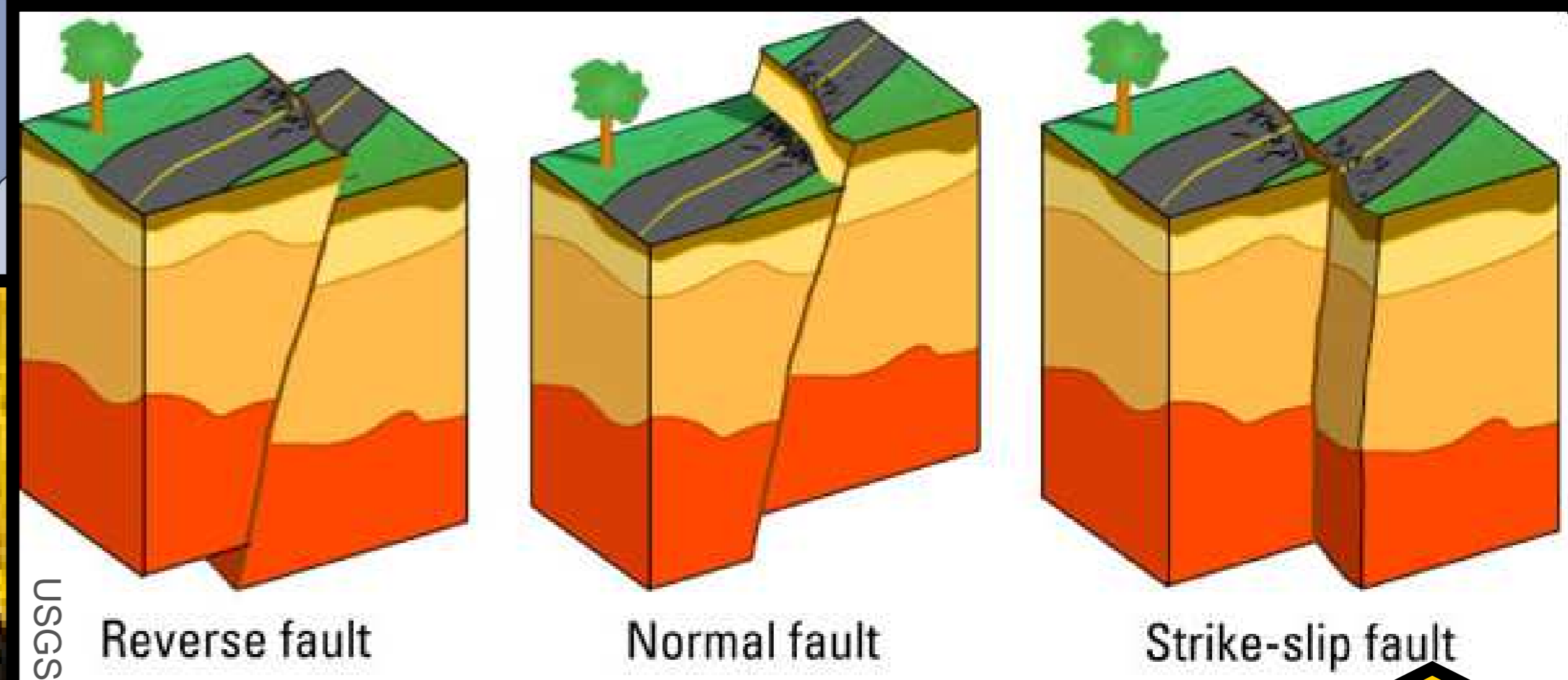
The join between tectonic plates is called a fault.



Britain

Earthquakes happen along faults. This is why some countries have many earthquakes, and some – like Britain – have very few.

Earthquakes can be very destructive. In 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, killing over 100,000 people and leaving over 1 million homeless.

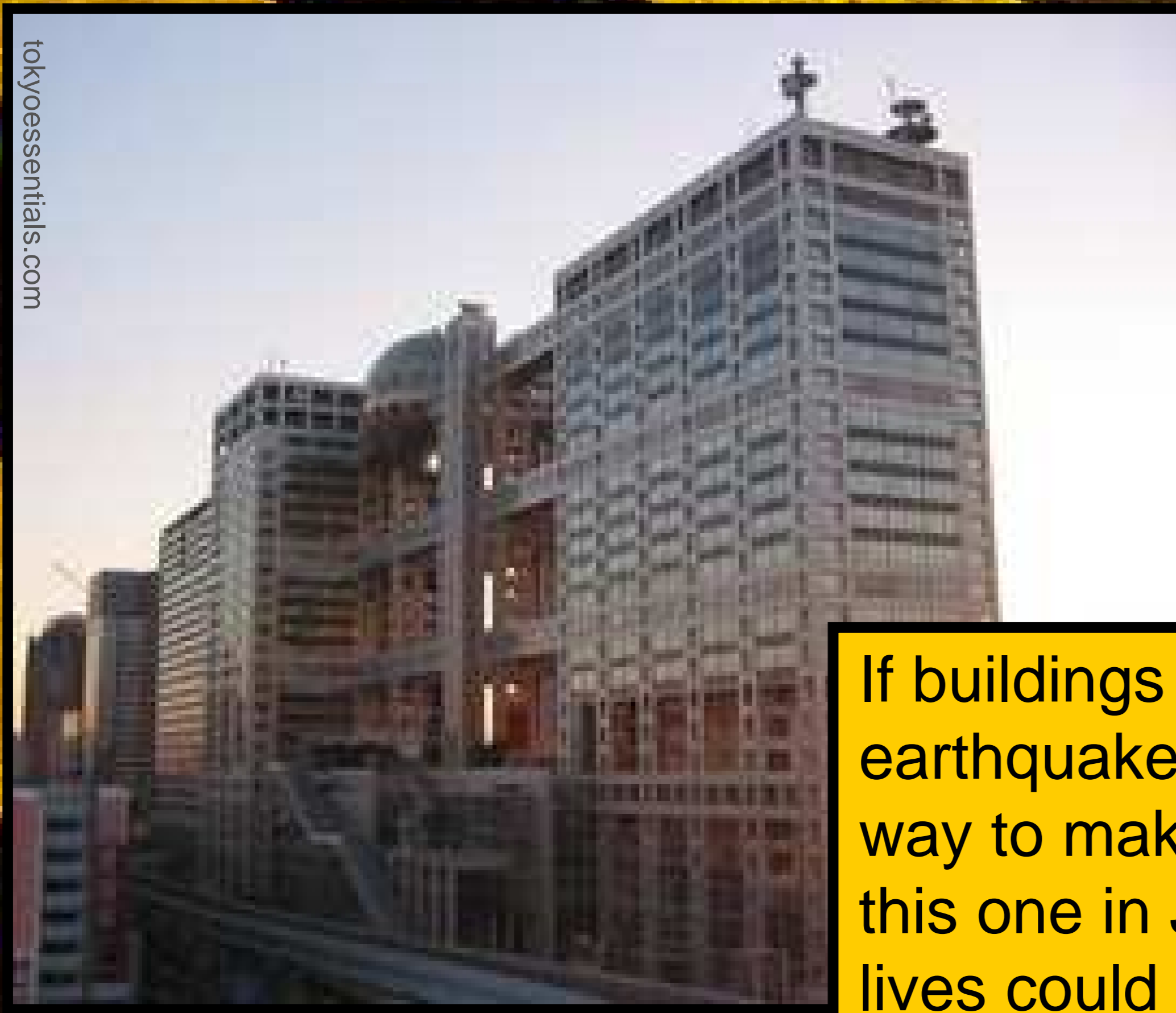


Poster © Jeannie Scott / NERC

Tectonic plates move in different directions. Sometimes they collide – creating a reverse fault; sometimes they move apart – creating a normal fault; and sometimes they slide past each other – creating a strike-slip fault.



Scientists detect earthquakes using seismometers. Although earthquakes can't be predicted – yet – faults can be found and people living nearby can be warned of the danger.



If buildings are weak, they can collapse when an earthquake hits. Scientists and engineers have found a way to make buildings that withstand earthquakes – like this one in Japan. If all buildings were this safe, many lives could be saved.