



The Nepal Flood: When a Glacier Broke Loose

Podcast length: ~17 min

Lesson time: 40-50 min

Episode: *Takaro Explains*, Episode 92



Listen to the episode

Kiran and Debkanya explain how a collapsing Himalayan glacier triggered a catastrophic flood in Nepal, and what it reveals about climate change.

Learning Focus

Students will examine the August 2026 Nepal flood as a case study connecting geography, physical science, and climate change, and consider questions of climate fairness between nations.

Learning Strands

Primary: Environmental Science

Supporting: Geography, Climate Change, Global Citizenship

Key Vocabulary

Glacier

Permafrost

Debris flow

Avalanche

Tsunami

Richter scale

Climate change

Emissions

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Describe the sequence of events that caused the August 2026 Nepal flood.
- Distinguish between a tsunami, an avalanche, and a debris flow.
- Explain how climate change is linked to glacier collapse and permafrost thaw.
- Evaluate the fairness of climate change's impact on countries with low emissions.

Materials Needed

- World map or atlas
- Whiteboard or chart paper
- Printed discussion questions (optional)

Learning Outcomes

Students can:

- Students can locate Nepal and the Himalayas on a map and describe the region's geography.
- Students can explain in their own words how a glacier collapse becomes a flood.
- Students can identify at least three individual or collective actions that reduce climate impact.
- Students can articulate an argument about climate responsibility and fairness.

Before Listening 3-5 min

Ask students to locate Nepal on a map before listening.

What do you already know about the Himalayas or about glaciers?

Listen to the Podcast 17 min

As you listen, pay attention to the following:

1. The sequence of events that led to the flood in Nepal on August 26th
2. The specific vocabulary used to describe the disaster (avalanche, tsunami, debris flow)
3. Why the hosts say the situation feels 'unfair' to Nepal

Check for Understanding 8-10 min

1. **Recall:** What glacier collapsed, and in which national park is it located?
2. **Explain:** In your own words, explain the difference between an avalanche, a tsunami, and a debris flow.
3. **Evidence:** What evidence does the episode give that the Himalayan region is warming faster than the rest of the planet?
4. **Reasoning:** Why did the monsoon season make the flood's impact worse?
5. **Evaluate:** Do you agree that it is 'unfair' for Nepal to suffer this disaster? Why or why not?

Remember: Remember: there are no wrong answers for the Evaluate question -- the goal is reasoned discussion, not a single correct response.

Choose One 10-12 min

OPTION A — DISCUSSION

Is It Fair?

As a class or in small groups, discuss:

- Is it fair for a country to bear the consequences of a problem it didn't cause?
- What responsibilities do bigger, wealthier countries have toward smaller countries facing climate disasters?

Encourage students to support their opinions with specific details from the episode.

OPTION B — EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Chain Reaction Diagram

In groups of 3-5, draw a cause-and-effect diagram tracing the chain of events from climate warming to village destruction.

1. Start with 'Himalayas warming nearly twice as fast'
2. Add each step: glacier weakening, ice collapse, debris flow, monsoon rivers already full
3. End with the flood's impact on villages, bridges, and power stations

Discuss as a class which link in the chain could realistically be interrupted.

Exit Ticket 2-3 min

One thing I learned about how climate change connects to natural disasters is...