

VOLCANOES!

Activity Sheet 5.1a Dating A Volcanic Eruption

Have you ever looked at a tree stump and noticed its rings? Count the rings and you will know how old the tree is. Each ring represents 1 year in the life of the tree.

If you look closely at **tree rings**, however, you will see that the spaces between rings vary in width. Trees do not grow the same amount each year.

What to do

You can "read" these tree rings and find out what year there was an eruption of Mount Katmai in Alaska.

What you know:

1. This tree was growing 48 kilometers (29 miles) northwest of Katmai Volcano.
2. After the eruption, the forests were blanketed in ash.
3. This tree's growth decreased for some years after the eruption, but then it increased.
4. This tree was cut down in 1962.

What you want to find out:

1. The tree's age:

(Count the number of rings from the center of the tree to the bark. Each dark band represents 10 years.)

2. The year the tree started to grow:

1962 - _____ = _____

the year the tree was cut down the age of the tree the year the tree started to grow

3. The year of the eruption:

(Count the number of rings from the center to the first thin ring.)

4. The number of years the tree's growth decreased:

(Count the number of thin tree rings)

5. The number of years the tree's growth increased:

(Count the number of wide rings.)

6. Why do you think the tree's growth increased?

Make a time line for the years that this tree was alive. Research and record events that occurred during the tree's life.

