

Surviving Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan)

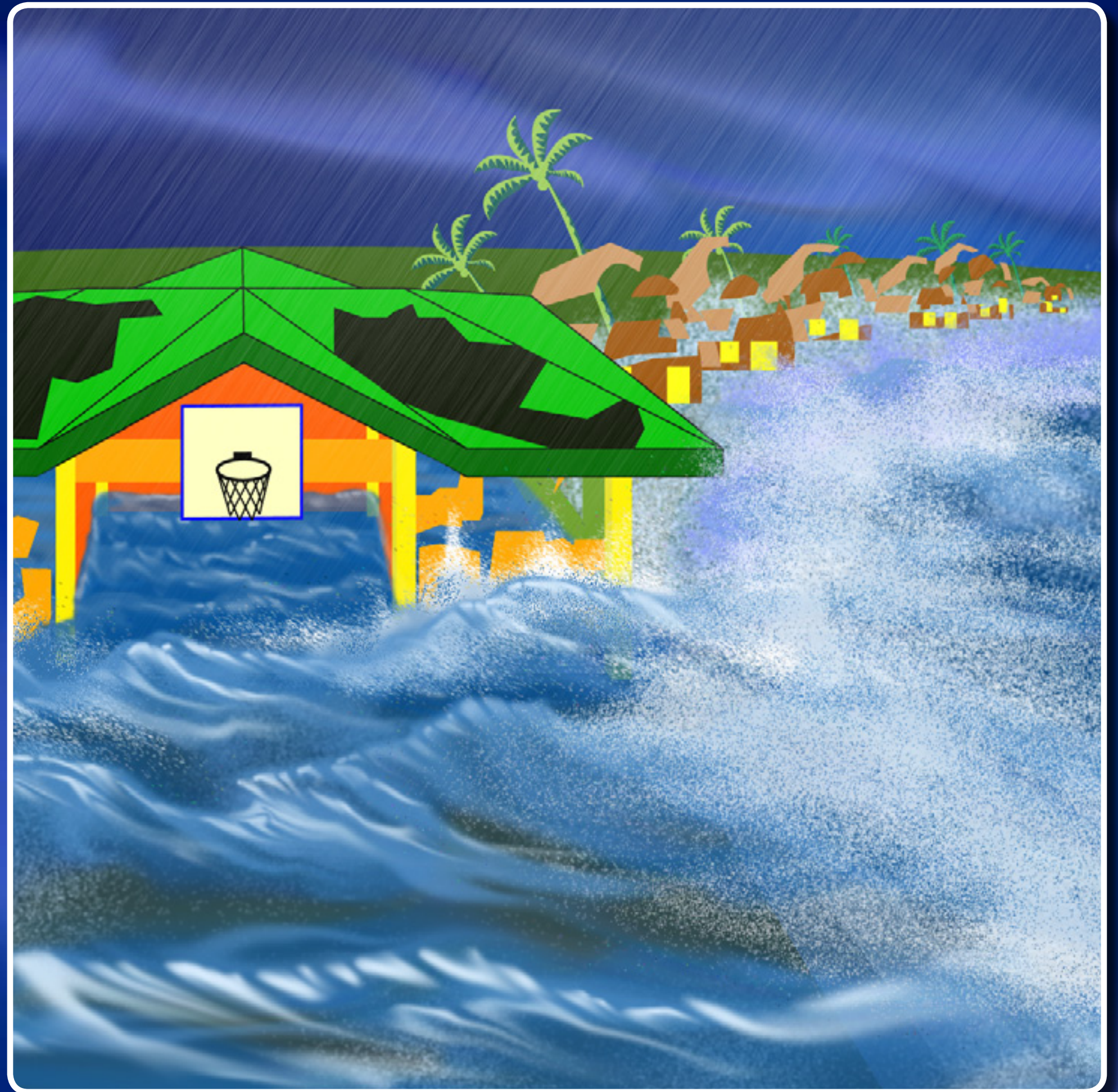
11:00am – 3:00pm November 8th, 2013

This is the life-changing story of one group of fishermen and their families.

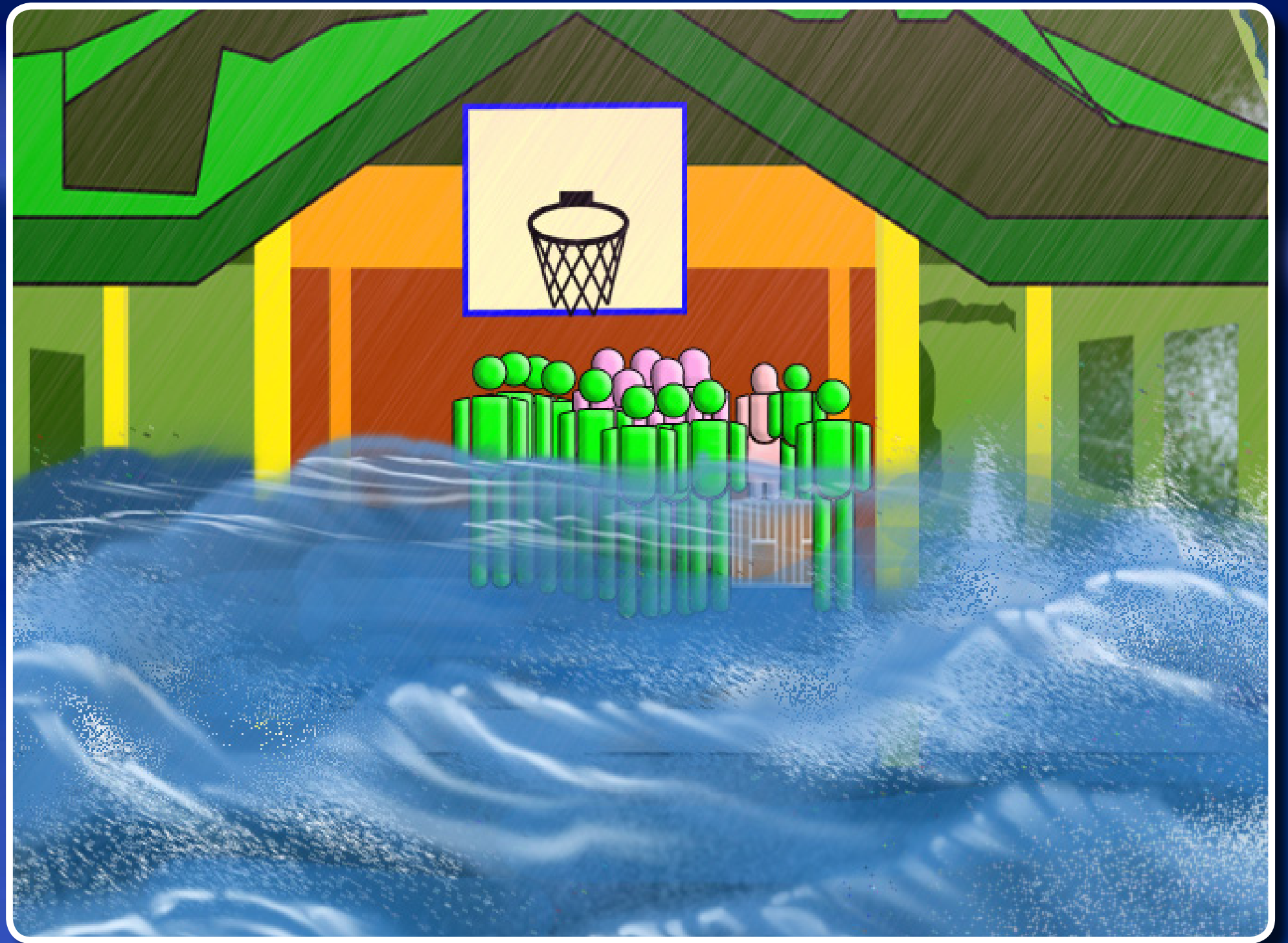


After having made landfall for the fifth time weakened Typhoon Yolanda sweeps across the northern part of Panay Island at low tide. Most of the fishermen and their families living on the many small intertidal islands north of Roxas City that barely reach out of the sea at high tide do not evacuate. They have seen many typhoons moving across the area during their lifetime, causing little damage.

This time it is different. By 11:00am the storm is very strong, destroying many of the nippa hut style homes in its path while the sea rises quickly above their low-lying island. Heading stooped-over into the strong wind they grab their children as well as some chicken coops and labor across the flooded basketball court to the only concrete structure on the island: their unfinished, open, dilapidated barangay hall.



They place the chicken coups along the rear steel rebar-enforced wall so that their children can stand on them as the water rises and stand in front of them. The still standing, also steel-reinforced side wall facing the oncoming storm protects them from being blown away. For the next four hours they cling to each other, trapped by the water swirling around them and the strong winds buffeting what remains of the concrete structure. Fortunately the roof does not collapse on them.



All are able to barely escape with their lives as the sea recedes by 3:00pm, thanks to the coincidences of a quick moving, weakened typhoon sweeping across their island at low tide. If the typhoon would have hit their island at high tide most would have drowned or would have been swept away as the side wall was slowly weakening and could have been blown out by the force of the rising water.

