exploring landforms
teacher’s guide

Editors:
Brian A. Jerome Ph.D.
Stephanie Zak Jerome

Assistant Editors:
Louise Marrier
Josh Hummel

Graphics:
Fred Thodal
a message from our company . . .

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teacher’s guide

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student activities

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student learning objectives

Upon viewing the video and completing the enclosed student activities, students will be able to do the following:

1. Understand that Earth’s surface does not have the same appearance in all places.
2. Explain that a landform is a feature on Earth’s surface.
3. Know that landforms are usually described by their shape.
4. Differentiate between a hill and a mountain. Describe the characteristics of each.
5. Identify and explain the features of a valley.
6. Explain how a valley is different from a canyon that has very steep sides.
7. Know that a plain is a large, low, flat landform.
8. Describe a plateau as a flat, elevated landform.

assessment

what do you know now? (p. 10):
This preliminary assessment is an assessment tool designed to gain an understanding of students’ preexisting knowledge. It can also be used as a benchmark upon which to assess student progress based on the objectives stated on the previous pages.

what have you learned? (p. 11):
This post assessment can be utilized as an assessment tool following student completion of the program and student activities. The results of this assessment can be compared against the results of the preliminary assessment to assess student progress.

video review (p. 12):
The video review can be used as an assessment tool or as a student activity. There are two sections. The first part contains questions displayed during the program. The second part consists of a five-question video quiz to be answered at the end of the video.
introducing the program

Before viewing the video show students several different images of landforms from a book, magazine, or other media source. The pictures should include a mountain, valley, a plain, and others if you like. Ask students if they have ever seen any features like these. Ask them to describe where they have seen them.

Write the term “landform” on the board. Explain that landforms are features on Earth’s surface. Discuss some of the landforms around the school or near homes of students. Explain that there are many different types of landforms. Some of these may be nearby, while others may be quite far. Tell students to pay close attention to the video to learn more about landforms.

program viewing suggestions

The student master “video review” is provided (p. 12) for distribution to students. You may choose to have your students complete this master while viewing the program or do so upon its conclusion.

The program is approximately 10 to 12 minutes in length and includes a five-question video quiz. Answers are not provided to the video quiz in the video, but are included in this guide on page 9. You may choose to grade student quizzes as an assessment tool or to review the answers in class.

The video is content-rich with numerous vocabulary words. For this reason you may want to periodically stop the video to review and discuss new terminology and concepts.

literature connections


video script

1 introduction

01 Have you ever climbed a mountain?
02 Maybe you’ve walked or driven through a valley.
03 Or, perhaps you’ve seen a large flat area called a plain.
04 Each of these places has unique characteristics.
05 What are the characteristics of these places?
06 What makes them different from each other?
07 And, what makes them interesting?
08 During the next few minutes we’re going to take a look at these
09 questions,...
10 .... as we explore the fascinating features of landforms.

2 what are landforms?

11 If you were to take a day-long drive from your home, you would
12 probably see lots of different scenery.
13 You might see rolling hills...
14 ... or large mountains.
15 Or, you might see long stretches of flat land.
16 These are all examples of landforms.
17 A landform is a feature on Earth’s surface.
18 Landforms are usually described by their shape.
19 There are many different types of landforms. We’ll take a look at a few
20 of them.

3 hills and mountains

21 You may have a landform near your school or home that gently rises
22 above the land around it.
23 This landform is called a hill.
Hills are small rises in the land. You might enjoy rolling down grassy hills,... or sliding down them in winter.

**How big is this mountain compared to a hill?**
The mountain is much bigger than the hill. **Mountains** are tall landforms with steep sides and pointy tops.

This tall, rocky mountain is called the Grand Teton. It’s located in a mountain range called the Rocky Mountains.

Mountain ranges are made up of many mountains over a large area. Mountains are great places to hike, ski, and to view the land below.

**Valleys**

If you have ever been on top of a mountain and looked beneath you, chances are you peered into a valley.

A **valley** is the low land between hills or mountains.

This famous valley called Yosemite Valley is located in California. Notice how it lies between two mountains.

Water often rushes down into valleys.

A landform that is similar to a valley is a canyon.

**Describe the sides of this canyon.**
The sides of the canyon are very steep. In fact, they’re nearly straight up and down.

**Canyons** are narrow valleys with steep sides.

You might have heard of the Grand Canyon. It’s a large, famous canyon. The Colorado River flows through the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

**Plains and plateaus**

These bison live on a landform called a plain.

**Describe how this plain looks.**

This **plain** is a large, flat place.

Plains cover large areas in the middle of North America.

Today, farmers raise lots of crops and animals on plains.

Another landform, called a **plateau**, consists of relatively flat land that is higher than the land around it.

Some plateaus are small.

Other plateaus such as the Colorado Plateau are huge, covering thousands of square kilometers.

These are just a few of the many different kinds of landforms.
During the past few minutes we explored some of the fascinating features of landforms. We began by seeing that landforms are described by their shape. Next, we highlighted some of the different landforms beginning with hills and mountains. After that we investigated the characteristics of valleys and canyons. Last, we took a look at plains and plateaus. This completed our fascinating exploration of landforms.

**Graphic Transition - video quiz**

1. Landforms are described by their ______.
2. A hill is _____ than a mountain.
3. A ______ is the low area between mountains.
4. Plains are large, ____ areas.
5. Canyons have ____ sides.
**answer key to student assessments**

**what do you know now?**
1. surface
2. hill
3. taller
4. valley
5. steep
6. mountain range
7. rivers and streams
8. plain
9. higher
10. crops

**what have you learned? (p. 11)**
1. higher
2. steep
3. crops
4. hill
5. rivers and streams
6. surface
7. taller
8. mountain range
9. valley
10. plain

**video review (p. 12)**
1. The mountain is much bigger than the hill. Mountains are tall with steep sides and pointy tops.
2. The sides of the canyon are very steep.
3. This plain is a large, flat place.

**video quiz (p. 12)**
1. shape
2. smaller
3. valley
4. flat
5. steep

**answer key to student activities**

**name that landform (p. 13)**
1. mountain
2. plain
3. canyon
4. valley

**comparing landforms (p. 14)**
1. The sides of a canyon are much steeper than the sides of a valley. A valley is wider than a canyon.
2. A mountain is much higher than a hill. Mountains have pointy tops.
Select the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. A landform is a feature on Earth’s:  
   - atmosphere  
   - air  
   - surface  
   - ocean

2. A small rise of land is a:  
   - dirt  
   - mountain  
   - hill  
   - river

3. What is the height of a mountain compared to a hill?  
   - taller  
   - shorter  
   - less  
   - the same

4. What landform is the low area between hills or mountains?  
   - peak  
   - valley  
   - summit  
   - stream

5. What best describes the sides of a canyon?  
   - steep  
   - short  
   - not steep  
   - soft

6. A large area with many mountains is called a:  
   - valley  
   - swamp  
   - mountain range  
   - desert

7. What often flows at the bottom of valleys and canyons?  
   - lava  
   - rivers and streams  
   - mud  
   - plastic

8. What landform consists of a large, low, flat area?  
   - mountain  
   - river  
   - hill  
   - plain

9. Compared to plains, plateaus are:  
   - lower  
   - denser  
   - hotter  
   - higher

10. What is commonly grown on plains today?  
    - crops  
    - dirt  
    - ice  
    - water
what have you learned?

Select the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. Compared to plains, plateaus are:
   - lower
   - denser
   - hotter
   - higher

2. What best describes the sides of a canyon?
   - steep
   - short
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9. What landform is the low area between hills or mountains?
   - peak
   - valley
   - summit
   - stream

10. What landform consists of a large, low, flat area?
    - mountain
    - river
    - hill
    - plain
Landforms are described by their ____________.

A hill is ______________ than a mountain.

A _____________ is the low area between mountains.

Plains are large, ______________ areas.

Canyons have _______________ sides.
name that landform

Directions: a landform is a feature on Earth’s surface. There are many different landforms. Color in the landform below and write its name.

1

2

3

4

Name:
**describing landforms**

**Directions:** Some landforms are similar. But, there are ways they are different from each other. Create drawings of each landform. Then describe how they are different. Listed are short descriptions of landforms.

Canyon: narrow valleys with steep sides.
Valley: the low land between hills or mountains.
Hill: small rise in the land.
Mountain: tall landform with steep sides and pointy top.

1. **Canyon**
   
   [Blank drawing area]

2. **Valley**
   
   [Blank drawing area]

How are they different?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
How are they different?

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________