

Changing Earth

Earth's surface is always changing. The changes can be slow or fast. They can affect the Earth's surface in very different ways. The changes can break down landforms or build Earth's surface up to create new landforms.



Fast Changes

Earth's surface can change very fast. Volcanoes can erupt and lava can create new landforms. An earthquake is the shaking of Earth's surface. This is caused by pressure from under the surface. Earthquakes create new landforms. When land moves quickly from high to low ground it is called a landslide. Landslides can happen when there is too much water in the soil or when there are not enough plants to hold the soil in place. Landslides create new landforms.





Slow Changes

In contrast, much of Earth's surface is changing slowly. During slow changes, landforms made of rocks can be broken down into smaller pieces of rocks in a process called weathering. Once the rock has been weakened and broken up by weathering it is ready for erosion. Erosion happens when rocks and sediments are picked up and moved to another place by ice, water, wind, or gravity. Weathering and erosion slowly cause the landforms to get smaller. After the pieces of rocks are moved, they begin to build a new landform somewhere else. Examples of slow changes include the erosion of mountains or the shaping of canyons.

ATOS Level: 6.2

Word Count: 189

Average Word Length: 4.7

Average Sentence Length: 11.8

Average Vocabulary Level: 2.7

LEXILE RANGE: 810L - 1000L