

Summary: Earth's Land and Water

Looking at Landforms

The earth has many landforms, such as plains, valleys, and mountains. Erosion helps change the shape of landforms. Landforms are one part of geography. Landforms affect where people build houses and communities. Many people live on plains because it is easy to travel and to farm on flat land. Other people live in valleys, which are the land between mountains or hills. The soil in valleys is good for farming. Not as many people live in the mountains. Mountains can be rugged and steep. Food is harder to grow on mountains.

Salt Water, Fresh Water

Many cities are near rivers, lakes, or oceans. Oceans have salt water. Rivers and lakes have fresh water. People need fresh water and salt water for many things. People need fresh water to drink, cook, and farm. They use water from rivers to make electricity. People use oceans for travel and fishing.

Many cities and towns build ports for ships. People use ships to send things all over the world.

Weather and Climate

Climate affects how people live. People choose shelter, food, and clothing to fit the climate where they live. Climates can be hot or cold, dry or wet. They may change with the season. Water and landforms affect climate. High mountains are cooler than valleys. Oceans cool nearby land in the summer. Climate also affects plants and animals.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

landform *noun*, a shape or feature of the earth's surface

erosion *noun*, the way wind and water wear away the land

geography *noun*, the study of people, places, and the earth

climate *noun*, the weather of a place over a long period of time



After You Read

REVIEW Why might people live on plains? Draw a box around the sentence that tells the answer.

REVIEW Why are many communities near water? Circle the sentences that tell how people use water.

REVIEW In what ways does climate affect people's lives? Underline the sentence that tells the answer.