

Geography
The Physical World
Vocabulary Chapter 2

Section One

1. **Dwarf Planets** – Small round bodies that orbit the sun, but have not cleared the area of their orbit of other orbiting bodies.
2. **Terrestrial Planets** – Planets that have a core and have a hard rock crust.
3. **Celestial Planets** - Gas planets that are less dense than rock planets and have many moons and rings around them.
4. **Asteroids** – Are small irregular shaped planet like objects and usually are confined to a belt between Mars and Jupiter. .
5. **Comets** – Are made of ice and dust particles and are in orbit around the sun.
6. **Meteoroids** - Are small chunks of rock or iron that may not be in a specific orbit around a planet.
7. **Abiotic Spheres**– The three spheres that are abiotic (non-living) which supports plant and animal life on earth (i.e. atmosphere, lithosphere, and hydrosphere).
8. **Hydrosphere**- All of the water found on earth which includes oceans, lakes, streams, and rivers.
9. **Lithosphere**- Also known as the earth's crust; and is made up of all the land area and ocean basins.
10. **Atmosphere**- Is the layer of gases extending above the earth's surface to space.
11. **Biosphere**- The part of the earth that supports life.
12. **Landforms** – Natural features of the earth surface created by erosion, weathering, glacial action, and/or plate tectonic.
13. **Continental Shelf**- An extension of the coastal plains into the oceans found off the coasts of the continents.

Section Two

14. **Core** At the very center of earth and is thought to be very hot, comprised of nickel and iron in a molten-solid form.
15. **Mantel**- Next to the outer core and below the crust and is a thick layer of molten rock,
16. **Crust**- Also known as the lithosphere and includes all landmasses and ocean basins.
17. **Pangaea** – The earth appears to have been one landmass or supercontinent (Pangaea) around 500 million years ago.
18. **Continental Drift**- Theory first published by Alfred Wegener which suggests that the continents were one landmass, but are now separated.
19. **Plate Tectonics** – The dynamic physical process that creates and constantly alters the landscape and physical features of the earth.
20. **Magma** – Molten rock that lies below the crust. When it reaches the surface it is often referred to as lava.
21. **Subduction** – The process by which the heavier sea plate dives beneath the lighter continental plate and back into the mantle.
22. **Accretion** – The process where pieces of the earth's crust come together slowly as the sea plates slide under the continental plate.
23. **Spreading** – Process by which the sea plates are pushed apart by upwelling magma. The most noticeable is the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.
24. **Folds** – Bends in the layers of rock caused by tectonic forces.
25. **Fault** – Can be either a crack or weakness in the earth's crust or a boundary between two tectonic plates.
26. **Faulting**- Caused by tectonic forces when land cannot be compressed or “folded” anymore.
27. **Earthquake** – Sudden violent release of energy as tectonic plates move away from one another, or as earth's crust weakens in an area. .
28. **Volcanoes** – Arise along plate boundaries and are built up by eruptions over time of magma that reaches the earth's surface
29. **Weathering**-A mechanical process by which rocks are broken down.
30. **Physical Weathering** – When large masses or rocks are broken down the physical process of freezing and thawing.

31. **Chemical Weathering** – Caused by the chemical changes in the rock by the introduction of salt, limestone, or other agents which dissolve rock over time.
32. **Erosion** – A wearing away of the earth's surface by wind, glaciers, or moving water.
33. **Wind Erosion** – Caused by the wind picked up sand, dust, or soil and moving it to another area.
34. **Glacier**- Large bodies of ice that move across the earth's surface. Glacial action is a type of erosion.
35. **Moraine** – Large piles of rocks and debris that have been left behind from glacial movement as they retreat.
36. **Water Erosion** – The wearing away and removal of the earth's surface toward bodies of water by the action of floods, streams, or other moving water that picks up sediment or scours the earth and deposits the particles in another place..

Section Three

37. **Water Cycle**- The name given to the continual movement of water caused by evaporation from the surface water on earth into the atmosphere. Then because of condensation is return to earth in the form of precipitation and flows back into one of many channels, lakes, streams, or oceans.
38. **Evaporation** – Changing of a liquid (water) into a gas (water vapor)
39. **Condensation** – Occurs when air cools to a point where the it can no longer hold the water vapor in it and the vapor turn back into a liquid.
40. **Precipitation** - Considered rain, sleet, hail, and snow.
41. **Oceans** – Large bodies of water that circle or encompass the landmasses. They are identified in order of size as the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, and Arctic Oceans.
42. **Desalination**- The removal of salt from seawater which allows the water to be used for irrigation and drinking (it is now freshwater).
43. **Ground Water** – All water that is found below the earth's surface.
44. **Aquifer** – Often considered an underground lake, but in reality it is an area or layer of porous rock that is saturated by water.