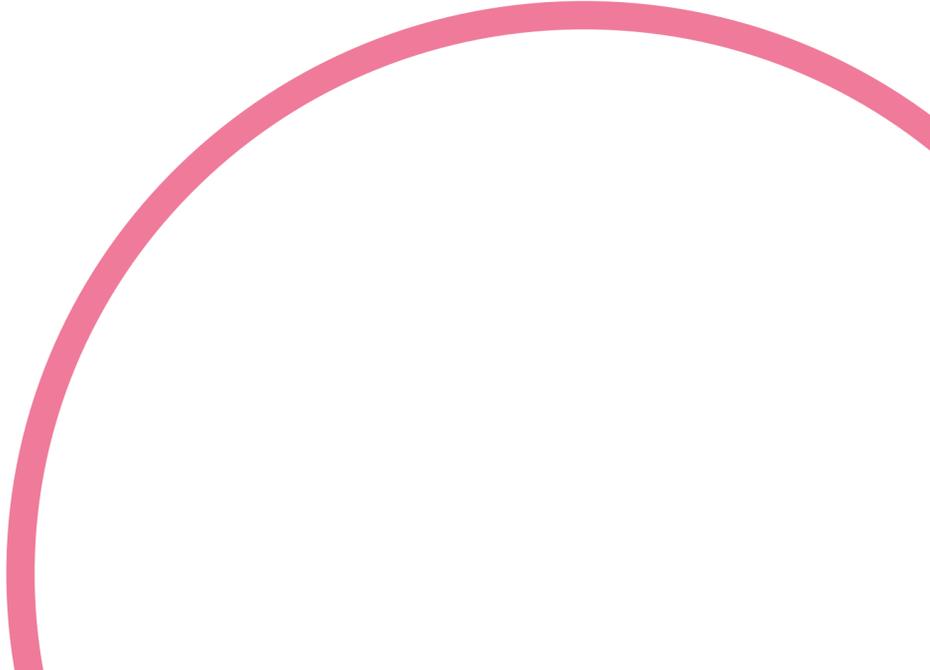


The title 'Land Shapes and Forms' is centered on the page in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is overlaid on a background of stylized landscape elements: a grey mountain peak on the left, a yellow sun in the center, a green hill with trees on the right, and a blue wavy shape representing water below the right side of the text. A light blue wavy line flows from the right side of the text across the bottom of the page.

Rivers

Which of these images show a river?



That's right!

They *all* show a river. Each image shows a flowing body of water. Rivers can be found in mountains and fields, and lead into oceans or lakes. They create waterfalls. They can be narrow or wide. The water might move fast or slow, flowing over rocks and sand.

Rivers are found all over the planet. While some may seem straight, they are mostly made of curves and forks. Their shape depends on the surfaces they flow over.

Canyons and Valleys

If you thought the river images also showed valleys or canyons, you were right!

Valleys are low areas with hills or mountains on either side. Canyons are like valleys, but they have steeper sides.

Canyons often have a river running through them. The Colorado River runs through the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

Think about this: Would a valley exist without mountains?

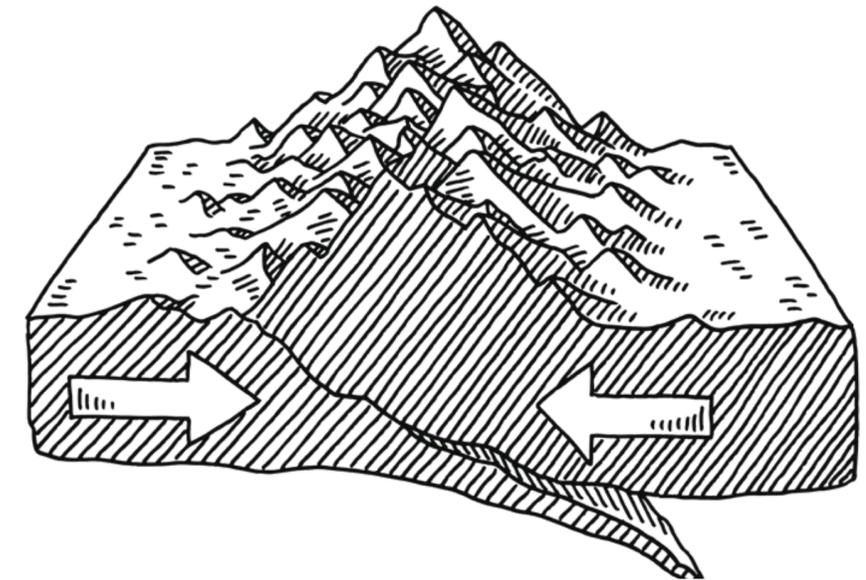


Mountains



Mountains are very tall landforms. They are often steep and rocky. They are found all over the Earth. Do you know which is the tallest mountain on land? It is Mount Everest, which is 8,848 m (29,029 ft.) tall.

Sometimes, mountains form in a long line called a mountain range. The longest mountain range above water is the Andes in South America. It is more than 7,000 km (4,300 mi.) long.

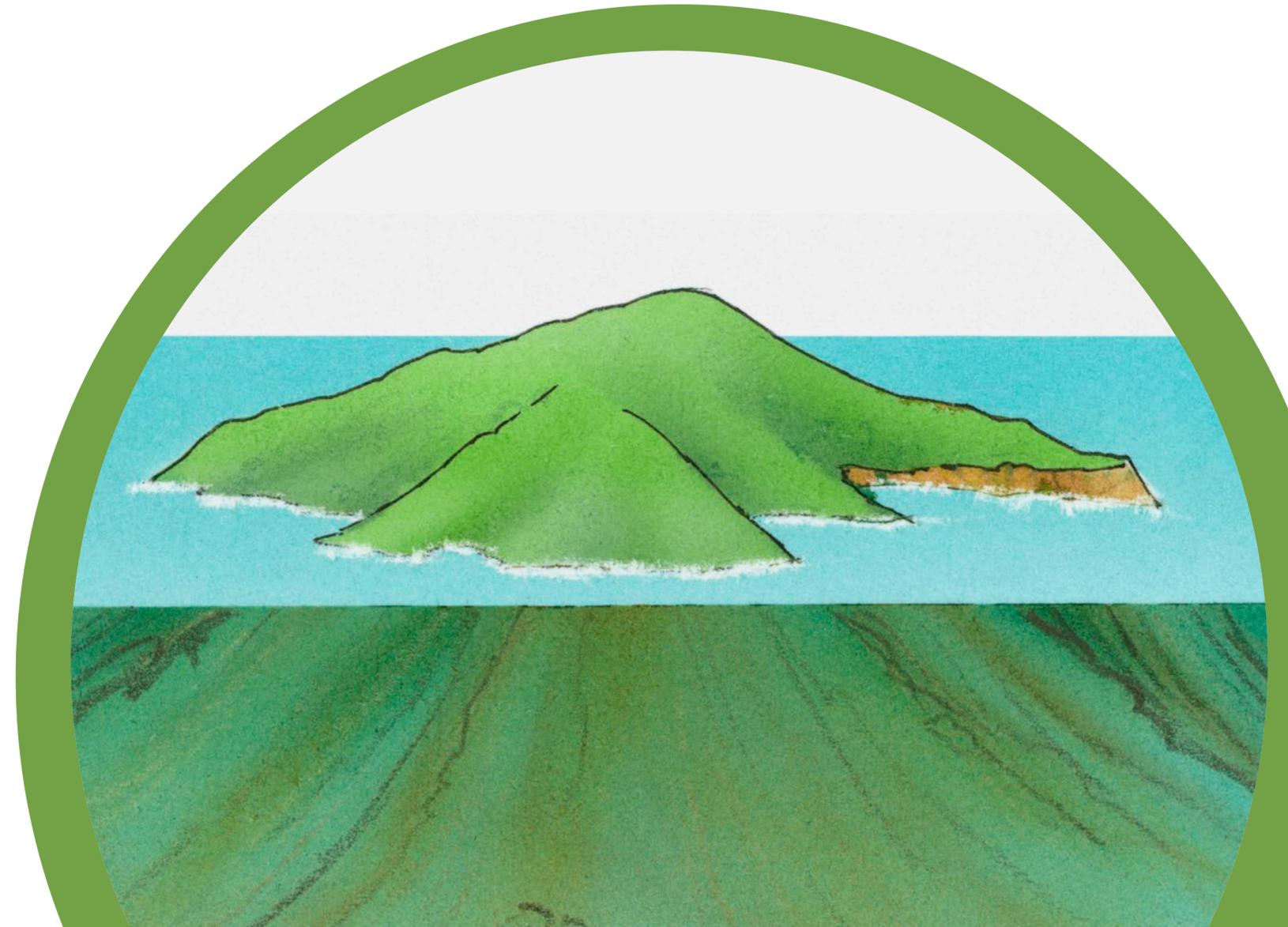




Islands

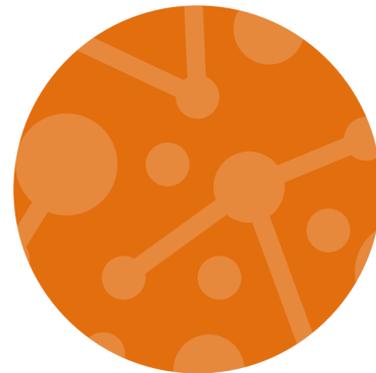
An island is a piece of land that is surrounded by water.

Many of the islands in the ocean are actually mountaintops that are above the surface of the water. The rest of the mountain is under the water.



Coasts and Beaches

Places where the land meets the ocean are called coasts, or coastlines. Beaches are areas of the coast that are made of sand and small, loose rocks. A beach is often a nice place to find shells and shiny glass.



Lakes

A lake is a large body of water that is surrounded by land. Here is something to think about: A lake can have an island, and an island can have a lake! One is water surrounded by land, and the other is land surrounded by water!

However, oceans do not have lakes. Why do you think that is?

