

Set 5. Earth Sciences (Erosion and Weathering): *Erosion*

Landslides

Landslides (sometimes they are called mudslides if the soil is wet and muddy) are a great way to change the landscape. Gravity is really at work with landslides. Landslides are when big amounts of ground slip down the side of a hill or mountain. Sometimes this happens slowly.

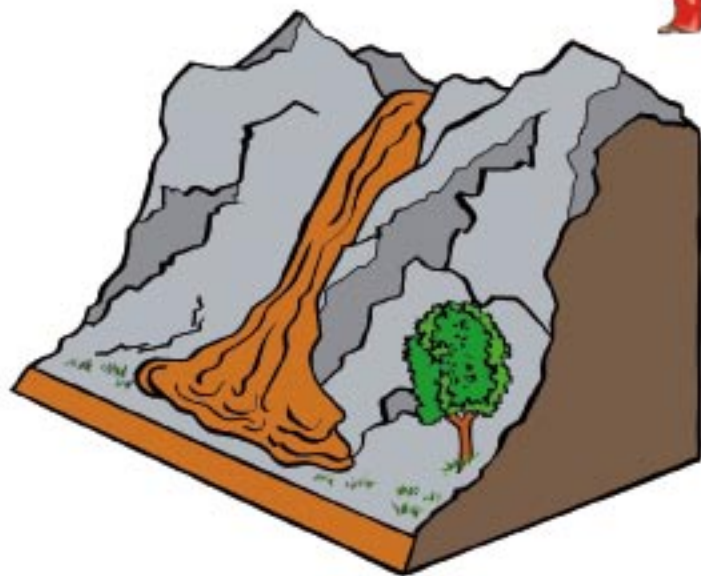


"It's called 'creep'. That word should help you figure out how it works. The soil slowly creeps down the mountainside. You can hardly notice it."

"Since you couldn't observe it directly, you would have to 'infer' that there was some movement of the land. Like if you noticed that trees were tilting at a funny angle or if rocks seemed to be moving downhill."



Sometimes whole chunks of land fall down at once. This usually happens after heavy rainfalls (especially when there are no plants or trees to hold the soil in place, like after a wildfire). The land soaks up a lot of water. It gets so heavy that it slides down the side of the hill or mountain. Once this movement starts, there is no way to stop it. It can be very dangerous to people and property.



When part of a hill or mountain slides away, the landscape looks very different!

Volcanoes

Another way Earth's surface can get changed very quickly is by a volcanic eruption.

Under a volcano is a lot of magma floating around. It begins to bubble up a long opening in the mountain of a volcano (it's called a "pipe" but it's not a real pipe like you have in your house or apartment).