

Erosion



Nature is always changing. Those changes are called natural events. Some natural events happen quickly. Think of a fire that starts when lightning strikes a tree. Other events occur slowly, such as when rocks are worn down over hundreds of years. Erosion (ih-ROH-jzun) is the name given to that very slow change.

Moving water can cause erosion. Have you ever seen waves crash against rocks on the shore? The water can chip off small pieces of rock. As more waves hit the rocks, the pieces become even smaller. Eventually, those pieces may turn into sand.

Ice can cause erosion. Some mountains have solid sheets of ice near the top. During warmer weather, a bit of ice melts. Then the sheet of ice may move slowly down the mountain. As the solid ice moves, it scrapes rocks, breaking off pieces.

Wind also causes erosion. Wind can blow sand and dirt. It can carry the dirt far away. In some places, strong wind will push sand against rocks. Over a long period of time, the wind wears down those rocks.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is erosion?

- A) the melting of solid sheets of ice near the top of a mountain
- B) a natural event that happens quickly, such as lightning striking a tree
- C) the name given to the very slow change of rocks being worn down

2. Erosion is an effect. What can cause erosion?

- A) water, ice, and wind
- B) lightning, fire, and trees
- C) rocks and sand

3. Erosion happens very slowly.

What evidence in the article supports this statement?

- A) Wind can cause erosion by wearing down rocks over a long period of time.
- B) Lightning striking a tree is a natural event that can cause a fire to start.
- C) Changes in nature are called natural events.

4. Read this paragraph from the article.

"Wind also causes erosion. Wind can blow sand and dirt. It can carry the dirt far away. In some places, strong wind will push sand against rocks. Over a long period of time, the wind wears down those rocks."

What can you infer from this paragraph about the strength of wind and how fast it wears down rocks?

- A) A wind's strength has no effect on how fast it wears down rocks.
- B) The stronger the wind blows, the more slowly it wears down rocks.
- C) The stronger the wind blows, the faster it wears down rocks.

5. What is the main idea of this article?

- A) Solid sheets of ice can cause erosion as they move slowly down a mountain.
- B) Erosion is a natural event that slowly wears down rocks.
- C) Waves can chip off pieces of rock and turn them into sand.

6. Read this paragraph from the article.

"Moving water can cause erosion. Have you ever seen waves crash against rocks on the shore? The water can chip off small pieces of rock. As more waves hit the rocks, the pieces become even smaller. Eventually, those pieces may turn into sand."

Why does the author ask the question, "Have you ever seen waves crash against rocks on the shore?"

- A) to help readers who have never been to a beach imagine what a beach looks like
- B) to suggest that readers visit a beach in order to better understand erosion
- C) to help explain how moving water can cause erosion

7. A sheet of ice on a mountain can cause erosion _____ it moves down the mountain.

- A) after
- B) when
- C) before

8. What is the definition of a natural event?

9. What happens to rocks on the shore of a beach when they are hit by water?

10. Imagine a beach with big waves and several large rocks along its shore. What might change about that beach in five hundred years? Support your answer with evidence from the article.
