

Changing Land Close to Home

1. To help your child learn more about changes to land, go to a nearby park. If possible, choose a park with a variety of landforms and natural features, including rivers, waterfalls, hills, and boulders. Ask your child to identify as many landforms as possible.
2. Once your child has identified the landforms, ask them to hypothesize (guess) how these landforms might have changed or caused change over time. (Your child has learned that wind, water, ice, and gravity cause changes to land.) Have your child record their hypotheses in a small notebook.
3. Next, have your child safely explore the landforms more closely to look for evidence of change. He or she has learned about three types of changes to land.
 - **weathering** – rock breaking down into smaller particles
 - **erosion** – the movement of rock particles
 - **deposition** – the settling of rock particles

For example, your child might note that the stones along a streambed are rounded and smooth. This is because the water carries small particles that grind down the rocks and make them smoother. Your child should note whether their observations support or contradict hypotheses about the landforms.

4. When you return home, research online the different landforms that your child observed in the park. In particular, look for how they have changed or caused changes over time. Have your child compare their observations to the information found in the research.

Here are some questions to discuss with your child:

1. How have wind, water, ice, or gravity affected landforms in the park?
2. Did you see any signs of weathering, erosion, or deposition? If so, what kinds?
3. What are some human activities that might change the landforms in the park? How would these changes affect the plants and animals that live in the area?