

Name: _____

Erosion

By Olivia Mendoza

The Grand Canyon is a famous natural landmark. At 277 miles long, up to 18 miles wide, and up to 6,093 feet deep, it's huge. But it's not the biggest canyon on Earth. You need to go to Tibet to see that. The Yarlung Tsangpo Canyon is only 36 miles longer than Arizona's Grand Canyon. But it is much deeper. In some places it reaches more than 19,000 feet deep. That's over 3.5 miles!



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Rock and soil being eroded for millions of years can leave a very deep canyon.

floating down a river. Water picks up bits of soil and rock too. It carries them away just like the boat.

Erosion usually takes a long time to notice. Imagine the river washing away little pieces of rock and soil every day. It's hard to see any difference even after a few years. Now imagine it doing that every day for *millions* of years. That's a lot!

What happens when all of that rock and soil has been eroded? It can leave a canyon—sometimes 3.5 miles deep.

But erosion doesn't only make amazing landforms. It can also be dangerous. Sometimes erosion itself is what's dangerous. Mass wasting erosion is not like normal erosion. It is the quick downward movement of rocks, soil, and vegetation (or plants). Deadly snowy avalanches and powerful mudslides are types of mass wasting erosion.

Sometimes it is the effects of erosion that are dangerous. Wind chipping away at a cliff can make rocks fall. If that cliff is next to a road, people need to put up nets to catch falling rocks. Wind



Wind erosion can cause rocks to fall onto roadways below.



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An avalanche is a type of mass wasting erosion involving large amounts of snow.

happen. They can also teach us safer ways to build cities and smarter ways to farm. And when we study erosion, we learn to appreciate landforms like canyons a little more.

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1. How long did it take for erosion to form the Arizona Grand Canyon?
 - a. hundreds of years
 - b. billions of years
 - c. thousands of years
 - d. millions of years

2. What is the quick downward movement of rocks, soil, and vegetation called? _____

What is its biggest difference from regular erosion?



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4. According to the information in the article, which of the following would *not* be considered erosion?
 - a. a waterfall eating away at the rock under it
 - b. a person picking up and moving a whole rock in the forest
 - c. a rockslide pushing dirt and breaking rocks
 - d. an icy glacier digging out a spot for a lake as it slides
 5. Both the Arizona Grand Canyon and Yarlung Tsangpo Canyon were eroded by rivers. Those rivers are still at the bottom of each canyon. Based on what you read, what do you predict will happen to the canyons over time? Why?

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The following terms are vocabulary words from the article. Match the vocabulary word with its correct definition by writing the corresponding letter on the line.



1. _____ mass wasting

a. plants



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3. _____ Grand Canyon

6. _____ landform

7. _____ geologist

8. _____ Yarlung Tsangpo Canyon

9. _____ avalanche

10. _____ vegetation

f. a specific shape or feature of land, e.g., a mountain or cliff

g. an easily-seen and well-known feature, either natural or manmade

h. a mass of snow, ice, and rocks moving quickly down a mountain

i. any type of erosion that happens quickly and has downward movement

j. to move from one place to another

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In the article, "Erosion," you learned about the process of erosion. You read about two landforms that were made through erosion: Arizona's Grand Canyon and Tibet's Yarlung Tsangpo Canyon.

Canyons are not the only landforms made by erosion. Use the internet to look up another big, interesting, or famous landform made or affected by erosion. Write a paragraph describing it and how erosion shaped it into what it is. Make sure to explain where it is located and the main cause of erosion (wind, water, ice, etc.). Consider: caves, waterfalls, some lakes, sea stacks, etc.



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1. How long did it take for erosion to form the

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1. rivers. Those rivers are still at the bottom of each canyon. Based on what you read, what do you predict will happen to the canyons over time? Why?

Answers will vary. An example is: They will get deeper as the rivers keep eroding them.

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9. h avalanche

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