

BENCHMARK • I

Land and Water

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Introduction

Imagine that you
are flying around
the world.

Look down.

You see water—
a lot of water.

In fact, most
of the Earth is
covered by water.



You also see land.

The land rises high and goes low.

It comes in many shapes.





Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world.

Mountains and Hills

When land rises high, it is called a mountain.

Many mountains in a row are called **ranges**.

A hill is when the land rises just a little.
Hills are smaller than mountains.





Valleys and Canyons

When land is low,
it is called a valley.

Valleys can be small and narrow.
They can also be big and wide.





Some valleys have very steep sides.

These valleys are called **canyons**.

Rivers make canyons.

They cut into the land and carry it away.



Plains

When the land is flat, it is called a **plain**.

Plains make good farmland.





Streams and Rivers

When it rains or when snow melts,
water flows downhill in streams.

Streams join each other to make small rivers.

Small rivers join each other to make big rivers.

Streams and rivers flow into ponds, lakes, and oceans.

Ponds and Lakes

Ponds and lakes are water with land all around them.

Ponds are small, while lakes are bigger.



Most ponds and lakes are filled with **fresh water**.

This means that the water is not salty.

Oceans

Oceans cover most of Earth.

Oceans are so big that you cannot see across them.

They are filled with **salt water**.



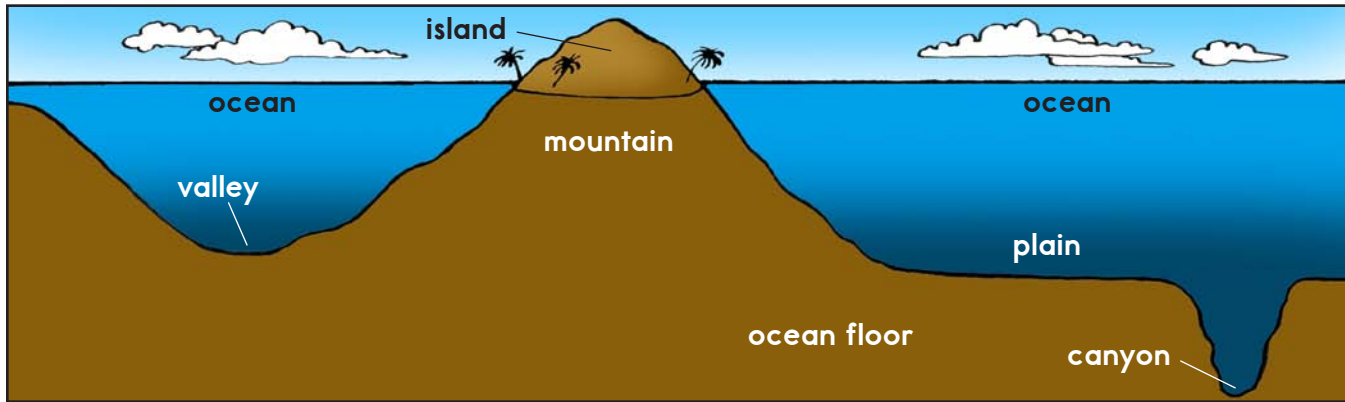
The land under the ocean is called the ocean floor.

The ocean floor has mountain ranges.

Some mountaintops stick out above the water.

These mountains become **islands**.

The ocean floor also has plains, valleys, and canyons.





Conclusion

The Earth is covered by land and water.
The different shapes of land and water
make the Earth interesting and beautiful.

Glossary

canyons	valleys with steep sides (p. 9)
fresh water	water that is not salty (p. 12)
islands	pieces of land with water on all sides (p. 14)
plain	a large area of flat land (p. 10)
ranges	lines of mountains (p. 6)
salt water	water that has salt in it (p. 13)

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Level I Benchmark Book
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LEVEL I	
Fountas & Pinnell	I
Reading Recovery	15–16
DRA	16

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A Reading A-Z Level I Benchmark Book • Word Count: 284



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