

Physical landforms are the natural shapes or forms of the earth.



archipelago

Say like this:

ARK uh pel a go

A chain of islands.



harbor

A place on the coast where vessels may find shelter protected from rough water by piers, jetties, and other artificial structures.



river

A large natural stream of water flowing in a channel to the sea, a lake, or another stream.



isthmus

Say like this:

iss mus

A narrow strip of land connecting two larger land masses.



peninsula

Say like this:

pah nin sah la

A piece of land having water on
three sides.



tributary

A river or stream flowing into a larger
river or lake.



plateau

Say like this:

pla TOE

An elevated, normally level piece of land; a tableland.

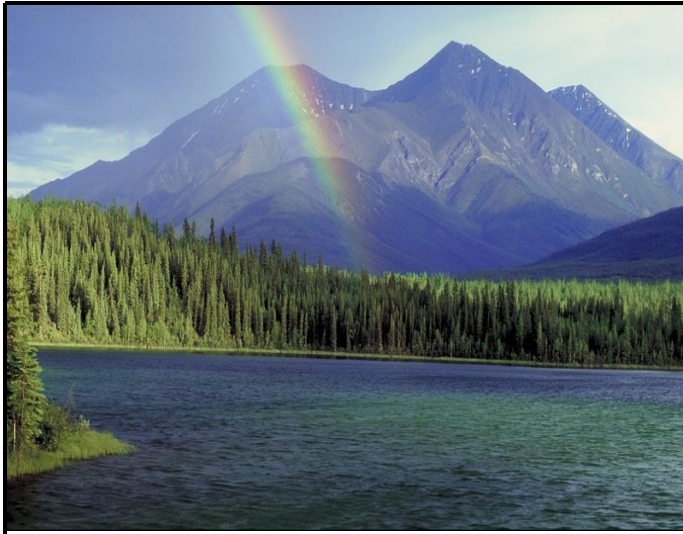


butte

Say like this:

B ew t

From the Old French meaning “a mound behind targets”. A hill that rises abruptly from the surrounding land and has steep sides. Smaller than a mesa.



mountain

A sharp, steep-side surface area at least 300 meters above the surrounding land surface, with considerable bare rock surface.



mesa

Spanish for “table”. A flat topped elevation with at least one side looking like a cliff. Common in the southwest region of the United States.



hill

A landform not big enough to be called a mountain.



volcano

An opening in the earth's crust through which molten lava, ash, and gases are forcefully thrown out from the interior of the earth.



bay and beach

A large land indentation formed by the sea. A bay is smaller than a gulf.



glacier

A large mass of land ice that is or has been in motion, a river of ice.



alluvial fan

A fan-shaped landform created when a river deposits alluvial soil onto a plain; also a fan-shaped stream deposit extending out from the bases of mountain ranges.



lake

A small body of fresh water surrounded by land.



delta

A sedimentary extending beyond the mouth of a river where it empties into a lake or river.



canyon

A deep, narrow valley with steep sides.