

Key terms for Theme 3

Tectonic Landscapes and Hazards

Terms used in **red font** are used in the specification. It would be reasonable to expect question setters to use these terms. Other terms and their definitions have been provided by WJEC to support those learners who are extending their range of specialist geographical terms. The lists are provided as word documents so that you can edit them to suit the learning activities in your school.

Aseismic	A description of buildings that are designed to withstand the shaking during an earthquake.
Ash cloud	Powdered rock fragments thrown from a volcano during an explosive eruption.
Caldera	A huge hollow in the earth's surface caused by the collapse of a volcano after a massive eruption.
Capacity	The ability of a group of people to withstand a natural disaster such as an earthquake or lahar. Capacity is the opposite of vulnerability .
Cinder cone	A volcanic hill that is conical in shape. A cinder cone is formed by the eruption of red hot lava that is thrown from the vent.
Constructive (plate margin)	A boundary between two plates of the Earth's crust which are moving away from one another. Divergence zone has the same meaning.
Crust	The outer layer of the Earth which is made of solid rock.
Destructive (plate margin)	A boundary between two plates of the Earth's crust which are moving towards one another. See constructive for the opposite type of boundary.
Divergence zones	A boundary between two plates of the Earth's crust which are moving away from one another. Constructive plate boundary has the same meaning.
Fold mountains	Large mountain ranges that have been formed by folding as two tectonic plates collide into one another.
Hazard map	A map or plan that shows areas at risk of volcanic or earthquake hazards.
Island arc	A group of islands formed by the eruption of volcanoes. When viewed from space the islands make a crescent (or arc) shape in the sea.
Lahar	An Indonesian word that describes a flood of water and volcanic ash or a mudslide down the slope of a volcano.
Lava flows	Features formed as molten rock (lava) runs away from a volcanic vent. Lava flows often form large flat features known as lava fields.
Lava tube	A natural tunnel through solidified volcanic rocks that is formed when hot lava flows just below the surface of the ground.

Magma	Molten, or semi-molten, rock that is stored beneath the surface of the Earth in, for example, a magma chamber beneath a volcano.
Moment magnitude scale (Mw)	A measure of the strength of an earthquake.
Ocean ridge	Long chains of mountains that run down the centre of several oceans. Oceanic ridges are formed by the process of plate divergence.
Ocean trench	Long, deep gorges in the ocean floor. Oceanic trenches are formed by the flexing of the oceanic plate during the process of subduction.
Plate margin	The boundaries of the Earth's plates where they meet each other.
Plates	Large rigid sections of crust. The force generated by their slow movement creates earthquakes and volcanic hazards.
Pyroclastic flows	A mixture of hot gas, ash and fragments of volcanic rock that flow quickly down the slopes of a volcano during some explosive eruptions.
Rift valley	A steep sided valley formed by the pulling apart (or rifting) of the Earth's crust during plate movement.
Seismometers	Scientific instruments used to measure the strength and frequency of earthquakes.
Shield volcano	A large volcano that has gentle slopes. Some of the volcanoes in Iceland and Hawaii have this shape.
Slab pull	A process by which the sinking of crust at a destructive plate margin pulls the oceanic plate away from the constructive plate margin.
Stratovolcano	A large, steep sided volcano formed from layers of solidified lava and ash that have been built up by many different eruptions.
Subduction	The process by which one plate is destroyed as it is slowly pulled under another plate.
Tsunami	A series of large and powerful waves caused when water is displaced by the movement of the ocean floor/lake bed during an earthquake.
Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI)	A measure of the size of a volcanic eruption which is based on the amount of ash ejected and the height of the ash cloud.
Volcanic hotspots	Areas of the Earth's crust in which volcanic activity is concentrated.
Vulnerability	The risk experienced during a natural disaster such as an earthquake. Some groups of people in society are more vulnerable to risk than others.