

Below the Surface

Academic Vocabulary
environment
noun that means the natural world

Earth is made of layers. These are parts that sit on top of each other. A lot happens on Earth's surface, the top part where we live. Even more happens below the surface! What happens below can change the environment. It can also destroy it.

The top layer of Earth is called the crust. We live on the crust. The crust is the thinnest layer. The thickest part of



the crust is about 25 miles (40 km) thick. The thinnest part is at the bottom of the ocean. It is only about 3 miles (5 km) thick.

The layer below the crust is called the mantle. It is the thickest layer. The mantle is almost 1,864 miles (3,000 km) thick. It is so hot rocks can melt! Sometimes, melted rock flows onto Earth's crust. The melted rock is called lava. Volcanoes are made of lava flows.

Earth's core is under the mantle. The core has two parts. The outer part is liquid. The inner part is solid. Scientists think the core's heat causes earthquakes. The heat can tear Earth. They think the inside part of the core spins. The spinning makes a shield. This keeps us safe from the sun. Scientists want to learn about all of these parts of Earth.



Phonics

Homographs

tear

Comprehension

Describe

Connections

The details in this paragraph connect to the sentence "Even more happens below the surface!" in paragraph one.

Unlock the Meaning of the Text

Describe Connections Some of Earth's layers get very hot. Which details in the text tell you how heat affects Earth?

Academic Vocabulary In paragraph one, the word *destroy* means "to harm beyond repair" or "to ruin." What other words can mean the same as *destroy*?