

Addison-Wesley **Earth Science – Terms and Definitions**

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**Section 1 Water On the Ground**

condense	To change from a gas to a liquid.
divide	The highest land that separates the direction in which water will run off the earth's surface.
evaporate	To change from a liquid to a gas.
freeze	To change from a liquid to a solid.
glacier	A moving mass of ice and snow.
lake	A body of water that collects in a hole or depression in the earth's surface; larger and deeper than a pond.
pond	A body of water that is smaller and shallower than a lake.
runoff	Water that follows off the earth's surface.
sheet runoff	Water that has no channels to direct its flow as it runs off the earth's surface.
stream	Runoff that follows in a channel between banks of soil, rock, or other material.
swamp	A low-lying water-soaked marsh or bog that forms when a lake or pond fills with sediment and vegetation.
transpiration	The process by which green plants, as they make food, give off water vapor through small openings in their leaves.
tributaries	Streams and small rivers that empty into one large river system.
water cycle	The process by which water is continually recycling between the earth's surface and the atmosphere; also called the hydrologic cycle.
Watershed/river basin	All the land that drains into a river, with its system of streams and other tributaries.

**Section 2 Water In the Ground**

adhesion	The attraction of water molecules to other kinds of molecules.
aquifer	A layer of permeable rock through which water travels.
artesian spring	A natural flow of water from an artesian system.
artesian system	A combination of rock layers in which water passes downward through an aquifer.
capillary action	The upward movement of water in soil due to adhesion and cohesion.
capillary fringe	An area just above the water table that receives its moisture by capillary action.
cohesion	The attraction of one molecule to another molecule of the same kind.
geyser	The eruption from the ground of water and steam that has been heated by hot magma or rocks in the earth's crust.
ground water	Water that has infiltrated the earth.
impermeable	Allowing no water to pass through.
infiltration	The process by which water sinks into the ground.
permeability	How easily water flows through a material.
pore spaces	Spaces between particles of sand or soil.
porosity	The total volume of the pore spaces in a certain volume of material.
spring	The place where ground water flows out of the ground because the water table has intersected the earth's surface.
water table	The boundary between the zone of aeration and the zone of saturation.
zone of aeration	The layer of soil between the water table and the earth's surface.
zone of saturation	The layer of soil below the water table.