

Lakes are created when water fills in hollows on the surface of the earth. The hollows were formed thousands of years ago when glaciers and ice sheets moved over the land, digging out hollows in the earth. As the Ice Age ended, the ice melted and filled the hollows to form lakes.

Movements of the earth form other lakes. The deepest lakes were formed from volcanic activity and other movements below Earth's crust. When the inner part of an old volcano falls below the rim of the **crater** (the opening at the top of the volcano), a hollow called a **caldera** is formed. A **crater lake** occurs when the caldera fills with water. Additionally, faults or groups of faults in the crust can create a **rift valley**, which is long and steep. Water fills the valley and creates lakes (**rift lakes**) that are deep and long.

Lakes can also be formed when natural or human-made obstacles dam rivers. Lava and volcanic debris can dam a river to form a lake, or humans can build dams. A pond is a body of water that is smaller than a lake.

A **swamp** is a combination of land and lake. It is usually shallow water that is still, or not running. The Everglades in Florida is a very large swamp. A **marsh** is like a swamp but is drier. A human may not be able to see water in a marsh, but the ground is always soggy and waterlogged.

When rain falls, some of it runs into bodies of water, but most water that falls will soak into the ground. It is called **groundwater**. After it soaks into the soil at the surface, it keeps sinking to the rocks beneath. If the rock is **impermeable** (water cannot pass through), the water may form an **underground river**. If the rock is permeable (absorbs water), the water becomes an **aquifer** (a pocket of water underground). If the rock is soft enough, it will erode over time, and the water will form tunnels, caves, sinkholes, and caverns.

An **oasis** is found in the desert and is created where an aquifer is close to the surface of the ground. A crack in the aquifer lets the water rise to the surface, which creates a fertile area in a desert.

Answer the Following

1. Name two ways lakes are formed. _____

2. What is the difference between a pond and a lake? _____

3. What is the difference between a swamp and a marsh? _____

4. What is groundwater? _____
5. What is an aquifer, and how is it created? _____

