**The Shape of the Land**

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| Level | **J** (Fountas & Pinnell) or equivalent |
| Subject Area | Science |
| Concepts | Time, Causation, Change |
| Reading Focus | Students will learn to use the comprehension strategies of Asking Questions and Determining Important Ideas, as they read, think, talk and write in response to the text. |
| Text Type | Informational |
| Academic Vocabulary | America, California, coast, color, day, dam, desert, dinosaur, Earth, hill, lake, land, mile, mountain, ocean, place, river, sand, sky, state, United States, weather, wind, world, years |

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| **Topic Talk** | * This book explores the concepts of form and change. * Ask: “When was the last time you saw a mountain, lake, ocean or canyon?” Have students think, pair, share and describe what they saw. * Show students the cover of the book and read the title aloud. Ask: “What questions do you think this book might answer?” * Read the back-cover blurb together. Discuss the question in the blurb with students and have them share their ideas. |
| **Contents** | * Open to the contents page and read the titles of the chapters aloud. * Point out that all of the chapter titles are questions. Ask: “What do you think each chapter will tell us?” * Next, have students think, pair, share with the person next to them what new things they have learned about the book from the contents page. * Introduce students to “Nat the Ant” at the bottom of the page and read the speech bubble aloud. |
| **Opening Chapters** | * Read the chapter 1 title and page 2. * Explain that in each chunk of text, there will be a main idea the author is trying to tell readers – it is something they are helping the reader to understand. * Ask students to look closely at the first paragraph. Ask: “What is an important idea from this section?” * Next, discuss with students that to help readers understand, the author will give examples and extra details to support the important idea. Ask: “What details has the author included in the first paragraph that tell us more about the important idea?” * Have students look closely at the diagram on page 3 and ask them to work with a partner and figure out what it is saying. Remind students that diagrams need to be read too, just like words. * Ask: “What questions have you thought of during reading?” * Read page 4 together and encourage students to follow along with the diagram. * Have students think, pair, share about what the important idea is on this page. * Choose some students to share what they discussed with the group. * Read the chapter title and page 5 aloud. * Have students look closely at the map and explain that maps are just like diagrams, so they can be read. Ask: “How does this map support the idea that the continents used to be joined together?” * Read pages 6 and 7 (pause at the ant question). * Discuss “open” questions (ones that do not answer yes/no) and give some examples. * Ask students to think of open questions to ask about the text. * Explain that some questions might be answered further on in the book, but some might not be. * Ask: “For the questions that aren’t answered, where could we find answers?” Brainstorm ideas together. * Discuss the ant questions together on page 7 as a group. * Set a purpose for reading from chapter 3 to the end of the book:   + Try to ask questions about what you are reading as you go.   + Try to find the important idea in parts of the text as you read and look for which parts are supporting details of the idea.   + Pause at the ant questions to answer them and read the Ant Tunnel carefully. |

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| As students read on independently, you can check in with them to discuss the ant questions, or personalize learning by using the *Mini-Lessons* and *Fluency, Language and Text Features* to scaffold parts of the book that might be unfamiliar or challenging.  Bring students together again for reflection using the “After Reading” prompts. |

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| **After Reading** | 1. In pairs, have students choose a landform and summarize to their partner how it was created. 2. Ask: “What questions did you think of while reading that were not answered in the book?” Discuss the questions together and where answers could be found. 3. Ask: “How did finding the important ideas help you to understand better what the author was saying?” 4. Discuss that figuring out the important ideas helps to remember important information from the book that the author is trying to tell us. | |
| **Writing Prompts** | *Fiction* | Imagine you are a landform. Write a short story about what kind of landform you are and tell the story about how you were made. |
| *Informational* | Write a short article about the area you live in, set in the future. Explain how it has changed and why. |
| *Letter Writing* | Imagine that people are thinking about changing a landform near your hometown – maybe damming a river for farmland, tunnelling through a mountain for a road, or knocking down a stone arch to build a new town. Write a letter to support or oppose this. |
| *Opinion* | What do you think is the most impressive landform in the book? Write an article explaining why you think it is more impressive than any other landform. Remember to write a conclusion. |
| *Research* | Research a landform near your hometown. What were the forces that shaped it? Write a report on your findings using knowledge you have learned from the book. |