Moon vs. Earth

A Comparison

How are the moon and Earth alike? How are they different?

Earth

Earth has much life and movement. There are examples of life everywhere: humans, plants fungi, and animals. Some forms of life are not visible to the human eye: microbes and bacteria, just to name a few.

The physical features of the Earth’s surface are called landforms. Landforms include a wide variety of things such as oceans, mountains, rivers, plains, marshes, glaciers, rivers, islands, beaches, valleys, peninsulas, and canyons. Forces such as plate tectonic movement, volcanic eruptions, deposition of sediment, weathering and erosion create the various landforms. The rock and water cycles play an important part in shaping (and reshaping) Earth’s constantly changing surface and landforms. Because the Earth’s outer core is made of molten iron, electric currents are produced here. This is what produces the earth’s magnetic field. The Earth’s atmosphere and heat from the sun produce the Earth’s weather: heat, cold, clouds, precipitation and wind.

Moon

If you were to look at the moon through a telescope, you would not see clouds, oceans, or forests. In fact, there are no signs of life at all. The moon, which has no surface water or atmosphere (no weather), has fewer landforms. Most of the moon’s surface is made up of a rocky surface. The main landforms on the moon are craters, plains, mountains, and narrow lunar valleys. Two of the main forces that have created these landforms are the impacts of meteors and comets, and volcanic action. The volcanoes on the moon were active back when our Solar System was forming. They are all dormant “sleeping” and have not erupted for millions of years. Since there is no atmosphere, there is no weather. Since there is no weather, erosion does not occur. As a result, the landforms do not often change.

Review the characteristics below and choose which one is for the moon, for the earth or for both.

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| Moon | Characteristic | Earth |
|  | Water |  |
|  | Soil |  |
|  | Rocks |  |
|  | Atmosphere |  |
|  | Plants |  |
|  | Animals |  |
|  | Mountains |  |
|  | Clouds |  |
|  | Craters |  |
|  | Gravity |  |
|  | Meteorites |  |
|  | Canyons |  |
|  | Wind |  |
|  | Glaciers |  |
|  | Oceans |  |