

CHICO CREEK NATURE CENTER – Topography and Erosion Lab

Focus: Students will learn how the landscape is shaped by running water. Two groups will switch off between 2 stations: a stream table and a topographic map station. Starting with a clean slate, students will observe the creation of valleys, cliffs, and deltas by a stream running through a sand table. We'll learn about meandering, undercuts, head-cuts, sandbars, and more. Our topographic relief maps of the area help students identify the natural features of the local watersheds. Then we will take a short walk to Big Chico Creek to see erosion in action.

(Time: 60 minutes)

Science Content Standards:

Grade 2	Grade 4	Grade 6
Earth Science		
3. Earth made of materials that have distinct properties b) weathering c) soils differ in texture and ability to hold water	5. Waves ... water... shape and reshape Earth's land surface c) Moving water erodes landforms	2. Topography is reshaped a) Water ... dominant process in shaping landscape b) Rivers and streams ... dynamic... erode, transport sediment, change course ... natural and recurring patterns
Science Investigation Skills		
4. a) Make predictions based on observed patterns and not random guessing.	5. Meaningful questions ... careful investigations a) Differentiate observations from inference. c) Formulate predictions.	7. Meaningful questions ... careful investigations a) Develop hypothesis. e) Recognize if evidence is consistent with proposed explanation.