

LESSON NOTE FOR WEEK FOUR

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

CLASS: SS1

TOPIC: RELIEF OF NIGERIA

NIGERIA: RELIEF AND DRAINAGE

Relief refers to variations in height or differences in height from place to place on the land's surface. It also refers to the surface features of the land above sea level. The relief of Nigeria can be grouped into two main classes. These are lowlands and highlands.

LOWLANDS/PLAINS

These are areas below 300m above sea level. Areas of lowlands in Nigeria include the following.

The Sokoto Plain (200 – 300m)

The Niger – Benue Trough / Valley (100 – 300m)

The Chad Basin or Bornu Plain

The Niger Delta (0 – 100)

The Cross River Basin (120 – 180)

The Coastal Plain (0 – 100)

The interior coastal lowland of western Nigeria (100 – 300m)

Rocks associated with lowlands

The coastal plain: Sedimentary rocks of alluvial deposit.

Niger – Benue trough: Sedimentary rocks such as limestone, sandstone and shale.

Sokoto plain: Sedimentary rocks like sand, clay, sandstone and limestone.

Chad basin: Sedimentary rocks of sand and clay.

Rocks generally known to be associated with lowlands are sedimentary rocks.

Importance of lowlands

1. Plains, especially level ones are good for human habitation. Population and settlement are usually concentrated on plains.
2. Some plains are rich sources of minerals like petroleum, coal, etc.
3. Plains, especially depositional plains are very fertile for agriculture.
4. Plains, since they are level, favours communication such as roads, railways, and airports.
5. Rivers and plains (basin) provide jobs e.g. fishing.
6. Rearing of animals is also better done on level grounds.
7. Some plains have rivers which provide water for so many purposes.

Disadvantages of lowlands

1. Some plains, especially in delta areas, may be flooded with water. Flooding is an environmental hazard.
2. Some plains may pose a serious barrier to communication, especially in flooded areas.

HIGHLANDS

These are areas that are over 300m above sea level. Areas of highlands in Nigeria and their height include the following:-

The North-Central highlands

The Western highlands

The Eastern highlands

The Eastern scarp land

The north-central highlands:

This lies in the centre of Northern Nigeria around Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi, Jigawa and Plateau State. The most important highland in these areas is the Jos Plateau (200 – 1500m). Rivers like Hadeija, Kaduna, and Sokoto etc. take their sources from Jos Plateau. The highest point of Jos Plateau is Shere Hills (1650m).

The western highlands:

This is found in the Western part of Nigeria around Ondo, Oyo, Kwara, and Osun State.

Important hills in this area include the following:-

Idanre hill (950m)

Apata hill (400 – 700m)

Epeme hill (350 – 600m)

Three important rivers have their sources from these highlands. They are river Ogun, Osun and Osse.

The eastern highlands:

This is found in the border between Nigeria and Cameroon. They have the highest mountain in Nigeria. They include:-

Mandara Mountain (1200 – 1500m)

Biu Plateau (800 – 1000m)

Adamawa Mountain (1800 – 2400m)

Alantika and Shebshi Hills (1600 – 2000m)

Obudu and Oban hills (1200m)

Rivers found in these areas are River Gana, Ngodo and Yedseram which flow to Lake Chad.

The eastern scarp land:

This is found within the eastern region especially around Enugu and Nsukka. The only major highland found in this area is the Udi Nsukka plateau (300 – 600m). Important rivers include Anambra, Imo and Cross River.

Rocks associated with highland

1. North central plateau, Western highland, Mandara Mountain, Shebshi, Alantika, Obudu and Oban hills are made up of basement complex rocks (a combination of igneous and metamorphic rocks).
2. Jos plateau is made up of volcanic rocks.
3. Udi hills are made up of Carboniferous sedimentary rock.

Importance of Highlands

1. Sources of mineral.
2. Formation of rainfall, especially orographic rainfall.
3. It is used for defence in times of war.
4. It serves as windbreaks.

5. They are a good source of rivers.
6. The rivers provide the site for construction of Hydro-Electric Power (HEP).
7. They provide tourist centres.
8. They are used for transhumance.

Disadvantages of Highlands

1. Barriers to communication.
2. Mountains promote soil erosion.
3. Mountains occupy the good land that would have been used for other purposes.
4. They prevent human habitation.
5. Mountainous soils are poor in nutrients, therefore, are not good for agriculture.

HOMEWORK

1. What is relief?
2. Describe the lowlands and highlands of Nigeria, giving at least 5 examples for each.
3. State 4 importance of lowlands.