

Geography: Flat Out Weird...

When you look at a map it's important to remember that it's a symbol and not the real thing. In the previous lesson you saw how something can look real close on a map, but can be far away in the real world because of the obstacles between two places.

It's easy to look at a map and forget that the real world isn't flat. The world is filled with mountains, valleys, buildings, and bodies of water. Take a piece of notebook paper and crumple it up. Unfold the paper and crumple it again. Do this several times until the paper is covered in wrinkles. Unfold the paper and lay it on top of a sheet of paper you haven't crumpled. Notice a size difference?

1. Why is the sheet you crumpled up smaller than the sheet you didn't crumple?

2. If you drew two points on a flat sheet of paper and then crumpled it up, would the distance between the two points change if you were an ant walking from one point to another?

3. For fun, you can crumple a dollar bill several times and end up with a bill that's always going to be smaller than a normal dollar no matter how hard you try to get the wrinkles out.