

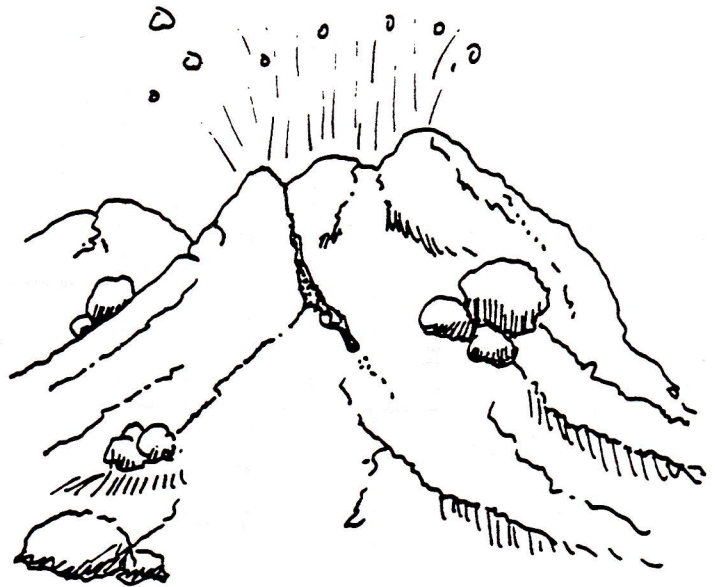
Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **VOLCANOES: Blasts of Power**

The birds did not sing at Mount St. Helens one Sunday morning. They sensed something was about to happen. The quiet was broken at 8:32 a.m. when the mountain exploded!

Mount St. Helens was really a volcano. It erupted on May 18, 1980, in a powerful blast. The mountain had been dormant, or asleep, for 123 years.

A volcano is a crack in the earth's crust. It forms when pressure builds underground. Then, hot gasses escape. The heat is so strong that rocks melt inside the earth. They rise to the surface and become a fiery liquid called "lava."



The northeast side of Mount St. Helens collapsed. It buried 26 lakes. Then, night came in the middle of the day. Clouds of ash blackened the skies up to 200 miles away.

People had to wear face masks outside. They shoveled the ash as though it were snow.

The force of the blast leveled all trees for 11 miles. About 65 people died, along with millions of birds and wild animals. They choked on the thick, hot ash. Some were hit by flying boulders. Others were burned.

Mount St. Helens can be seen in the state of Washington. Hawaii is another state with active volcanoes. Hawaii has a black sand beach. It was formed from lava.

- 
- 
1. What is a volcano? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  2. What is lava? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  3. Where would you find a black sand beach made from lava? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. What made night come in the middle of the day? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  5. What is a word that means "broke out or exploded"? \_\_\_\_\_