Our World

Design Intent

The dynamic forces of nature shape and inspire our imaginations. Rivers crawl along the surface, shifting boundaries and carving stone. Mountains are heaved high by enormous plates underground. Tornadoes weave along the landscape, powerful enough to move anything in their paths and while these influences may seem too grand to comprehend, the basic principles of *Our World* can be replicated on a much smaller scale. Put the powers of the planet in the hands of some pint-sized people, and watch them light up as they deepen their connection to the world around them.

Technology Components

- AR Sandbox- An AR (Augmented Reality) sandbox is an interactive tool that combines a physical sandbox with 3D visualization using a projector and depth-sensing camera. As users shape the sand, the projector displays real-time topographic maps, water simulations, and other features onto the surface. It is commonly used for teaching geography and earth science concepts in an immersive way. Refer to the classroom activity guide for recommended usage.

Mural Features

- Waterfall- A waterfall is a natural feature where a river or stream flows over a steep drop. The flow of water drops into a pool below, creating mist and sound. Over time, waterfalls can shape the landscape by eroding rock and carving deep gorges.
- Mountain- Mountain-A mountain is classified as a landform that rises at least 1000 feet or more above its surrounding area. Mountains are found in elongated ranges or chains and are formed through tectonic forces, erosion, or volcanism. The highest mountain is Mount Everest in the Himalayas.

Themes to Explore

- Weather
- Erosion
- Climate Change
- Conservation
- Forces
- Earth
- Sink or Float
- Rainbows

T**hemes to Explore**

- Water and Land
- Plants
- Habitats

Mounted Artifacts

- Wind Tunnel-A wind tunnel uses a fan to generate airflow around an object, allowing observation of how the air interacts with it. Researchers use wind tunnels to learn more about how an aircraft will fly. Refer to the classroom activity guide for recommended usage.
- Cattails- A cattail is a tall, reed-like wetland plant with long, slender leaves and a distinctive brown, sausage-shaped flower spike. Found near ponds, marshes, and lakes, it provides habitat for wildlife and helps filter water. In late summer, the flower head releases fluffy seeds that disperse in the wind.
- Cave- A cave is a natural space found underground or inside a rock, formed over thousands or even millions of years by water slowly wearing the stone away. Some caves have rock formations called stalactites (hang from the ceiling) and stalagmites (grow from the ground). Caves stay about the same temperature all year long, even when it's very hot or cold outside.
- Kayak-a kayak is a small, narrow boat powered by a double-bladed paddle. Designed for one or two people, it sits low in the water and is ideal for gliding through rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. Its shape allows for agility and speed.

To Find Out More

- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- USGS: Lakes and Reservoirs
- Museum Links: Smithsonian Learning Lab, Exploratorium: Tools for Teaching and Learning
- PBS Learning Media: Science