



Lake - How did this lake get here?

Fact

- This lake is Lake Te Anau in Fiordland in the South Island.
- Millions of years ago the whole of Fiordland was very flat and made up mostly of rocks such as schist (pronounced sh-ist) and gneiss (nice).
- Between 10 and 2 million years ago, after the Ice Age, ice covered part of the South Island.
- When the ice moved (like a huge frozen river) it carved huge V shaped valleys in the rock and that was how Lake Te Anau was formed.
- Lake Te Anau was a huge valley this is now filled with water.

Do you know

- Te Anau is the largest lake in the South Island and the second largest lake in NZ.
- Lake Te Anau was formed by ice in between the Pliocene and Pleistocene eras – between 2 and 10 million years ago. This time is known as the age of Mammals and came after the Age of the Dinosaurs.
- In places Lake Te Anau is up to 417 metres deep. If you're a metre tall imagine 417 of you standing one on top of each other!
- Schist rock is made up of medium grains of material in wavy or flaky layers.
- Gneiss rock comes in dark and lighter coloured layers of coarse grains.

Experiments you can do

Make a lake in the sand next time you're at the beach. Use your hands or a spade to carve out a valley in the sand then fill it up with water. Try making a lake with "arms" like Lake Te Anau.

Other Investigations

Find out about how New Zealand glaciers move and what they do when they erode the land.

Find out how other lakes were made. How was Lake Taupo made? It's in a volcanic area. Was it made by huge ice glaciers? Are there any lakes near you? Maybe Lake Ellismere near Christchurch or Lake Rotoiti in Rotorua? Find out how your nearest lake was formed.