

Mount Etna is one of the most active volcanoes in the world and is in an almost constant state of activity. It is the tallest active volcano in Europe located on the east coast of Sicily. It lies above the destructive plate boundary between the African Plate and the Eurasian Plate.



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/59948030@N04/6809305084/>  
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### Student tasks

1. Watch a video of Mount Etna erupting in one of a series of eruptions in 2012.
2. Write a commentary to describe the eruption as you view it on the video clip. The best commentaries will be selected to present to the class.
3. Carry out internet research to produce a fact file about Mount Etna.
  - Use Google maps to find Mount Etna. Use the zoom feature and view images as well.
  - Click on this link for a regular update of activity.  
<http://www.volcanodiscovery.com/etna.html>

You must include maps, diagrams and information about each of the following aspects:

- location
- plate boundaries
- type of eruption
- causes
- effects on people and the environment
- responses
- prediction and prevention

4. One effect of the eruptions on Mount Etna is shown below. In 140 characters or less, tweet the effects of the eruption in the photograph below:



House destroyed by lava on Mount Etna  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/notahipster/2636328762/>  
© little blue hen 2008

Mount Etna is not the only volcano in Italy and three others have erupted in the last hundred years. Stromboli has been in almost one continuous eruption for the past 2000 years. There have also been at least nine other centres of volcanic activity in historic times,

5. Locate the following Italian volcanoes: Stromboli, Vesuvius, Volcano and Lipari.
6. Research one other volcano in Italy.
7. Explain why Italy has so many volcanoes.

### Extension tasks

- Produce a fact file on either Stromboli or Vesuvius. What similarities can you see between your chosen volcano and Mount Etna?
- On May 20<sup>th</sup> 2012 a magnitude 6 earthquake hit the Emilia Romagna region of northern Italy and killed 7 people and injured at least 200 others. This was followed by a further earthquake (magnitude 5.8) in the region on May 29<sup>th</sup> which caused an additional 18 deaths. Aftershocks continued into June and there was a further magnitude 4.5 earthquake in the region on June 6<sup>th</sup>. What is the link between Mount Etna and these earthquakes?

Sant Agostina city hall damaged in the May 20th earthquake  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/acanella/7260188756/in/set-72157629872787966/> © Alessandro Canella 2012



## Teaching notes

Mount Etna is an excellent example of an active volcano to include in units of work on plate tectonics. Updates on eruptions on Mt Etna are available at <http://www.volcanodiscovery.com/etna/news.html>

Several live webcams of Mount Etna are available through a simple internet search and include [http://www.ct.ingv.it/index.php?Itemid=202&option=com\\_wrapper&view=wrapper](http://www.ct.ingv.it/index.php?Itemid=202&option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper), <http://www.villaducalce.com/media-gallery/etna-webcam> and [http://www.volcanotrek.com/webcams/etna\\_webcams.htm](http://www.volcanotrek.com/webcams/etna_webcams.htm).

1. The internet has many video clips of eruptions on Mount Etna. Four examples are given below of the 2012 eruptions:

<http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/16143493>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-16969942>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/video/2012/apr/13/mount-etna-erupts-video>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17700377>

Writing a commentary ensures that pupils engage with what they are viewing and the activity can be used to extend knowledge about different types of volcanic eruptions. Pupils could work individually on this activity.

It is suggested that some good commentaries are selected and pupils asked to read them out as the clip is viewed again by the whole class on the whiteboard.

2. Encourage pupils to research using different sources. The class could be arranged in pairs or small groups for this activity. This will encourage pupils to organise the completion of the task.
- 3-7. These remaining questions should aid the understanding of plate tectonics.

In these activities, pupils develop:

- knowledge, understanding and application
- locational geography
- research skills
- presentation skills
- a detailed case study