

Geol 303 Writing Assignment (Mt. Thunder - a hypothetical Volcano)

You are an investigative reporter with the Cascade Union Tribune. A team of scientists from the U. S. Geological Survey has set up a base camp in the village of Boomdale, a small mountain community ***nestled in a valley*** near Mt. Thunder (see Satellite image, below). The USGS has arrived, with some urgency, to monitor recent earthquakes which could be related to an impending volcanic eruption from Mt. Thunder. This picturesque volcano, with its summit ***covered by a cap of glacier ice and pristine snow***, is typical in most all respects to the ***other large volcanoes in the Cascade chain***.



Satellite image of Mt. Thunder. Note that the village of Boomdale is located in a valley lying east of the volcano, about 15 km from the summit area.



Picturesque side view of Mt. Thunder, with steep upper slopes and gentler lower slopes.



USGS Scientist,
Dr. Bigbrain

After interviewing Dr. Bigbrain at the USGS, you are now convinced that there is a real danger of Mt. Thunder erupting in the next few months. Your job is to write a newspaper article informing the public (particularly the inhabitants of Boomdale) about what they might expect from such an eruption. Keep in mind that your readership knows nothing about volcanoes, and little about science in general. You need to ***describe*** to the public, *in some detail*, the nature and cause of Cascade volcanism in general, the type of volcano Mt. Thunder is, the type of potential volcanic hazards that might occur if Mt. Thunder were to erupt,

and what can be done to prevent the loss of life from a potential eruption. Describe why or why not the geographic location of Boomdale would be susceptible to such hazards. You need to inform the public, without causing wholesale panic. You should come up with an appropriate headline, using your name as the byline (include Red ID). Your newspaper column should be about 3 pages long, double spaced, with 1-inch margins. The Boomdaliens are waiting for your article with great anticipation!

Be conscientious and thorough. Your grade will be based not only on content and your knowledge of the science, but also on your writing style and your ability to express yourself in a coherent, well-reasoned fashion, with proper usage of grammar and punctuation. The paper must be written in your own words, following a logical progression of thought. Simple regurgitation of lecture material should be avoided.