

1.5 EXPLORING THE YUCATÁN

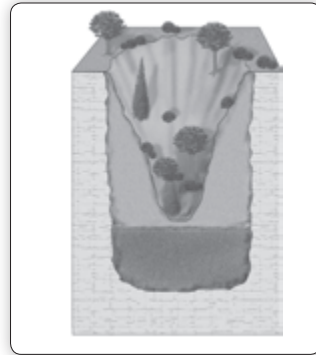
Sequence the Stages of a Cenote

Underground pools known as cenotes are an important part of the groundwater supply for the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico. These formations occur naturally in the soft, porous limestone. Cenotes take thousands of years to form, going through four stages. The illustrations show each stage, but these stages are not in the order of how they occur.

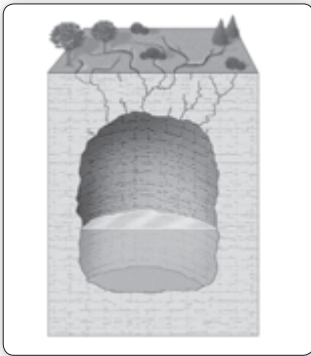
a.



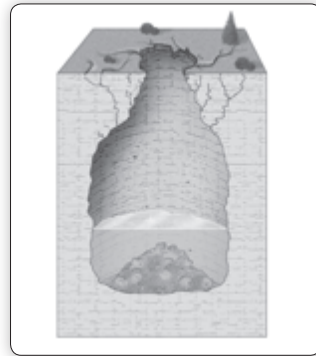
b.



c.



d.



1. **Identify the Stages** Read about each stage in the formation of a cenote below. Find the illustration at left that matches each description, and write the letter on the appropriate line.

- c** **Solution Cavern** Minerals in the groundwater travel through underground cracks in the soft limestone. They gradually dissolve the rock, forming water-filled underground caves. A thin layer of harder rock forms the roof of the cave.
- Young Cenote** Weathering and erosion cause the roof of the cave to collapse. The cavern becomes an open pool of water.
- Mature Cenote** Over time, wind and weather erode the soil around the cenote. Particles of rock and soil, leaves, and other debris fall to the bottom of the pool. The water becomes shallower.
- Dry Cenote** More rocks, soil, and plant and animal remains gradually fill in the pool completely. It becomes a shallow hollow or basin, where trees and plants grow.
2. **Make Inferences** In what kind of landscape or terrain would pools like cenotes become very important as sources of groundwater?