

Unit | Handout |
3 | 16 |

Lesson 6: Continental Drift

Purpose: To arrange the continents based on fossil patterns.

Guiding Questions: How do scientists know that the earth's continents have not been in the same position that they are today?

Background

The Continental Drift theory was proposed in the early 1900s to explain why certain geologic features (e.g. fossils, mountain ranges, etc.) were found on continents that were thousands of miles apart. This theory was very popular but failed to explained what caused the continents to move. It was later replaced by the theory of plate tectonics.

However, continental drift theory still offers some valid evidence that the continents were once together as one large landmass. These lines of evidence include:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

In this activity, we will examine the fossil evidence. You will use the evidence to identify patterns and use those patterns to join the continents together as one large landmass. Follow the instructions on the plastic sheet. Use the back of this sheet to arrange your continents. Do not glue or tape your pieces until you have discussed with your group that your arrangement is acceptable.

Name

Period

Date

DO NOT TAPE OR GLUE PIECES UNTIL YOU CONFIRM WITH YOUR GROUP THAT YOUR ARRANGEMENT IS LIKELY/POSSIBLE.

