Introduction Name: _____

Continental Drift Theory

In the early 1900's, German Meteorologist **Alfred Wegener** developed a theory describing how the continental land masses were moving across the Earth. He called this movement **Continental Drift**.

Wegener noticed that the continents fit together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. He was not the first to observe this, but he was the first to gather evidence suggesting that the continents were in motion.

Wegener was convinced that all the continents were once part of an enormous, single landmass that broke apart. He discovered evidence for his claim. **Fossils** of a fresh water dinosaur called a **Mesosaurus** were found on the continents of Africa and South America. He found a plant fossil called **Glossopteris** on several different continents as well. He traced the paths of ancient glaciers and mountains that seemed to end on one continent and continue on another.

Wegener believed that all the continents were once together in a landmass he called **Pangaea**, which means "all lands" in Greek. He believed Pangaea existed around 240 million years ago. Slowly these continents have moved to assume their current positions.

1. Who was Alfred Wegener?
   _____
   _____
   _____
2. What is Continental Drift?
   _____
   _____
   _____
3. What was a Mesosaurus and what does it have to do with continents moving?
   _____
   _____
   _____
4. What was Pangaea?
   _____
   _____
   _____

Vocabulary Review Name: _____

Continental Drift Theory

Define the following terms using your notes and textbook. Put the definitions in your own words.

a. Pangaea

b. Continent

c. Mesosaurus

d. Glossopteris

e. Fossil

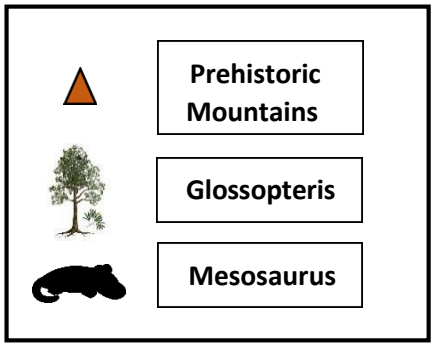
f. Crust

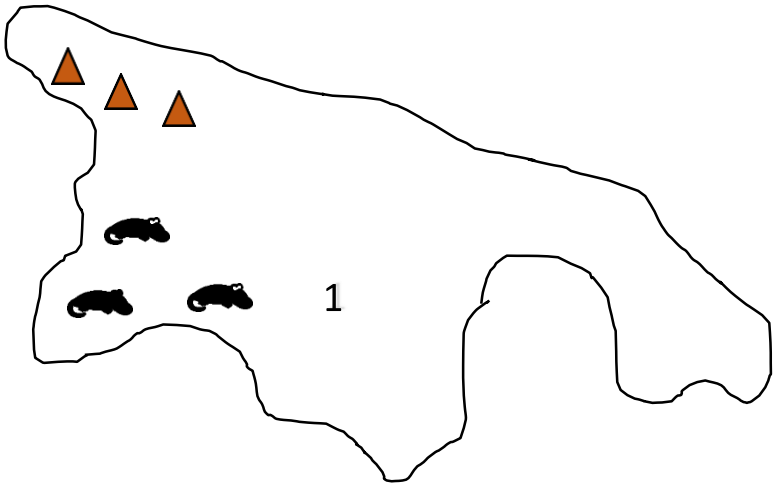
g. Mantle

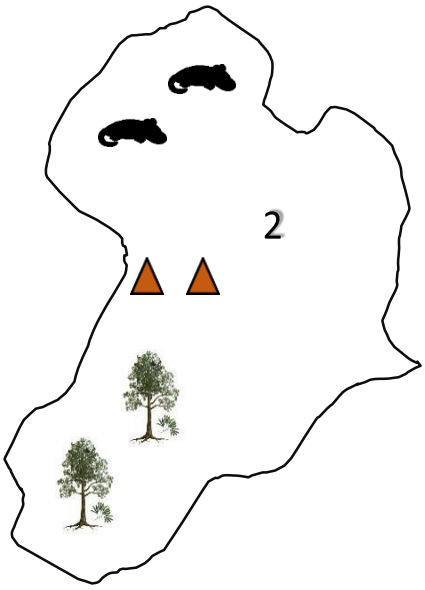
h. Alfred Wegener

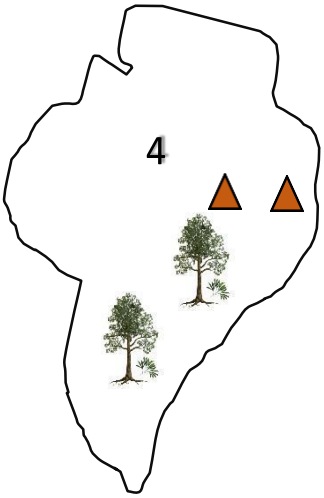
Pangaea Cut and Paste Activity

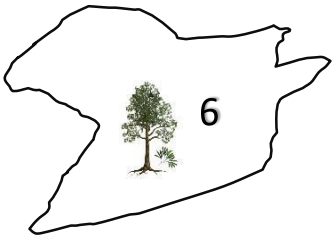
Cut out the continents. Then match them together using fossil types, prehistoric mountains, and shapes. Glue them to the following page.

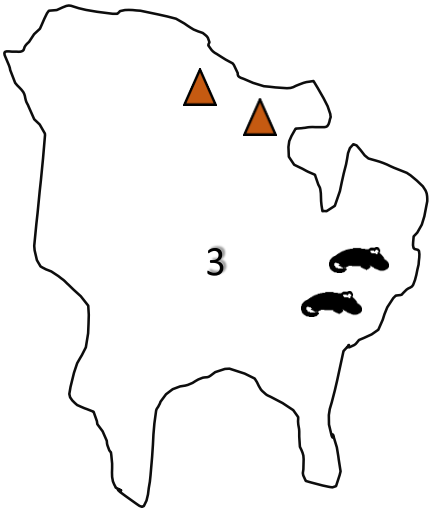


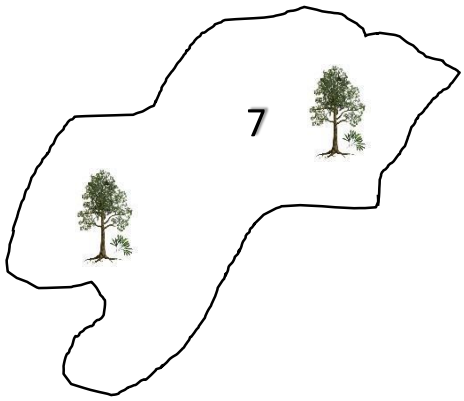












Pangaea – 200 Million Years Ago

1. Europe and Asia
2. Africa
3. North America
4. South America
5. India
6. Antarctica
7. Australia

Mesosaurus

Glossopteris

Prehistoric Mountains

Continental Drift/ Plate Tectonics

Across

6. Fresh water dinosaur found on different continents
7. A part of the crust that is broken and moves
9. Layer at the very center of the Earth
12. The ancient supercontinent

Down

1. A fossilized plant found on different continents
2. The measurement of the energy of an earthquake
3. Earthquake waves are considered this type
4. Any evidence of past life
5. These sometimes happen when an earthquake occurs under water
8. German meteorologist who found evidence for plate movement
10. This event may occur at plate boundaries and involves shaking of the ground
11. The thin outer layer of the Earth