

Wegener's Theory of Continental Drift

In 1912 a German scientist names Alfred Wegener presented his theory of continental drift to the scientific community. He suggested that the continents had once been joined as a single landmass. He called this supercontinent *Pangaea*, a Greek word that means "all the earth." Wegener proposed that Pangaea began to break apart about 200 million years ago and that the continents slowly drifted to their present location. What evidence did Wegener give in support of his theory? Continue to find out!

Directions:

1. Complete the *Fossil and Mountain Chain Evidence* on your blank sheet of paper using scissors and glue. Don't forget to cut out the map key and provide a title on your map!
 2. Attach your map of Pangaea into your notebook.
 3. Use your reconstruction to answer the discussion questions below in your notebook in complete sentences.
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Discussion Questions:

Answer in complete sentences in your notebook to accompany your map.

1. Why did you arrange the continents the way you did? Defend your reconstruction with evidence.
2. What other evidence could you have used to reconstruct Pangaea?
3. Why does the presence of *Cynognathus reptile* in South America and Africa suggest that these continents were once joined together?
4. Why do you think the pieces don't fit together exactly? Provide at least two reasons.
5. It is generally considered that dinosaurs lived in warm climates, yet fossil remains are found in Antarctica. How can this be explained?

For Class Discussion:

For each of the statements in each box we will decide if the statement is evidence and whether it supports the movements of the continents.