

Name: _____

Plate Tectonics

Date: _____ Period: _____

Earth Science

Lab Activity: Continental Drift

INTRODUCTION:

Since the early 19th century people have thought about the jigsaw fit of the continents. South America and Africa appear as though they could fit together.

In 1912, Alfred Wegener proposed his idea of Continental Drift that built upon the puzzle-like fit of the continent with even more evidence. Unfortunately, he could not explain the mechanism on how the crust moved and his theory was not taken seriously.

OBJECTIVE:

You will see how the continents appeared to fit together and how the outline of the continents supports the Theory of Continental Drift.

VOCABULARY:

Continental Drift -

Alfred Wegener -

Pangaea -

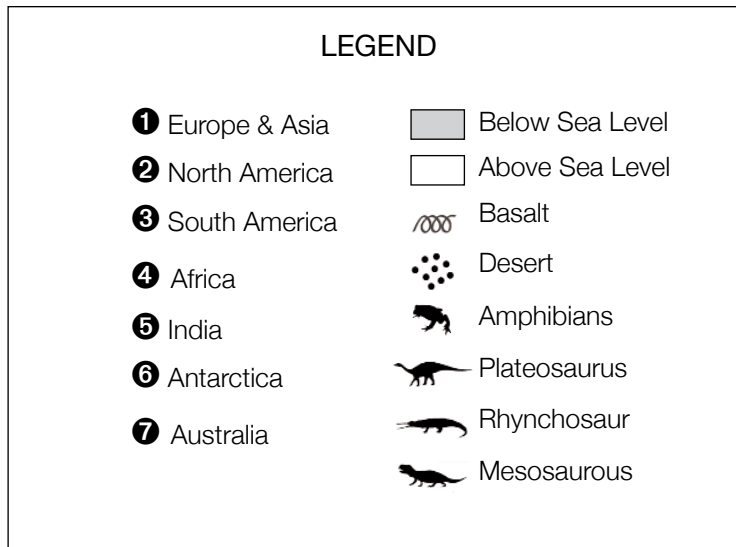
Mesosaurus -

Glossopteris -

Lab Activity: Continental Drift

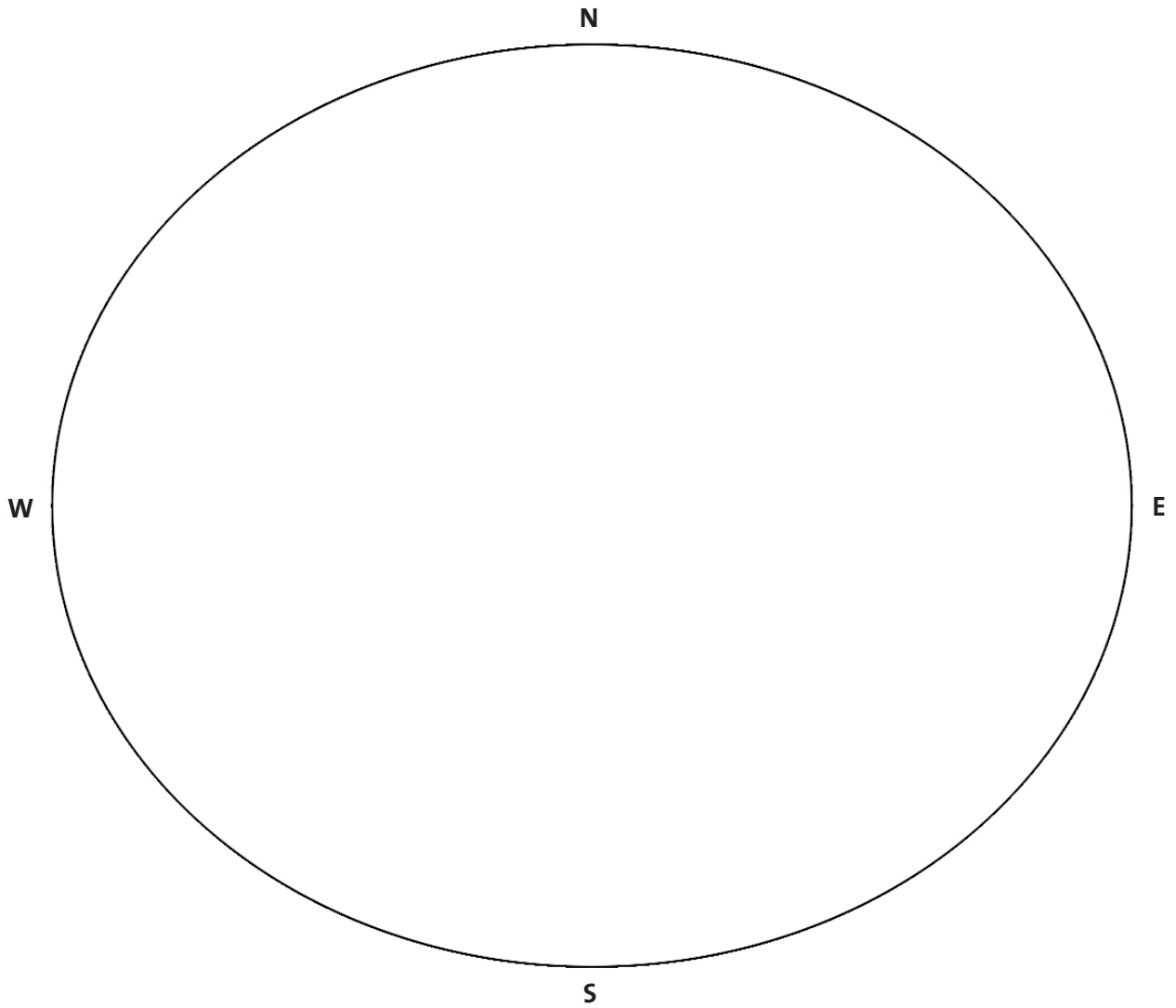
PROCEDURE:

1. On the “Continental Drift Cut-out Page” located on page 100, cut out the continents. Be sure to keep the “Below Sea Level” on the puzzle piece.
2. On the report sheet, fit the continents together to form one large landmass. Use the legend to match up similar counterparts on the other continents.
3. Glue or tape the continents down to your report sheet.



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REPORT SHEET



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Who was responsible for developing the Theory of Continental Drift?
2. What was the inferred motion of North America relative to Africa over the past 200 million years?
3. How has the climate of northeastern United States changed over the past 200 million years?
4. Where in the United States is there measurable evidence that the continents are moving?
5. What could explain the existence of coal deposits in Antarctica?

CONCLUSION: What evidence is there that the present-day continents were once a single landmass?

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CONTINENTAL DRIFT CUT-OUT PAGE

