

## **Continental Drift Lesson Plan**

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**(1) 90 min period**

### **Summary:**

The continents and seafloor change shape throughout history. Evidence bridging the continents, including rock types, plant and animal fossils, and mountain chains, indicate that there was previously only one landmass on Earth, the supercontinent called Pangea, and that the continents have since broken up and drifted apart. This is the theory of Continental Drift. In this lecture and activity, students will learn about the movement of the continents and the evidence scientists used to link together continents that are no longer next to each other. Students will build the supercontinent Pangea from puzzle pieces in the shapes of the current continents by matching fossils and mountain chains. Main points of this presentation are: 1) The continents have changed position throughout history; 2) Scientists pieced together the theory of continental drift based on matches of fossils, mountain and glacial evidence, and the fit of the continents; 3) Scientists were reluctant to believe continental drift because they couldn't imagine how the continents could move.

### **Materials:**

Global Map (you can also use the one in the lecture slides)

*Lecture\_ContinentalDrift.ppt* Lecture Slides (including presenter's notes contained within the powerpoint).

*Activity\_ContinentalDrift.pdf* Packet (1 per student)

Construction Paper

Scissors, Glue, & Crayons

### **Documents:**

*Activity\_ContinentalDrift.pdf*

*Lecture\_ContinentalDrift.ppt*

*Lesson\_Plan\_ContinentalDrift.pdf*

**Prep:** There is very little preparation required for this lesson. Make sure that materials are ready for students to use.

### **Lesson Plan & Instructions:**

1. Warm up: Start by having students examine a map and observe the shape of the continents. Ask students to write what they observe about the continents' shapes.
2. Present the Lecture Slides (annotated in detail on each slide). Have students take notes if you wish.
3. Using the Continental Drift puzzle worksheet, students should color code the evidence on the continents and legend and cut out the individual continents.

Using the evidence of mountains and fossils, students can piece together the approximate original shape of the supercontinent Pangea. Once they have completed assembling their puzzle, they can glue it onto construction paper.

4. Students can then complete the two worksheets included in the packet.

