

Ancient Earth

Question: How Were The Continents Aligned Before They Separated?

Materials:

3 copies of a world map, scissors, 3 sheets of construction paper, glue, globe or world map

Directions/Procedures:

1. Cut out the continents from one copy of the world map.
2. Arrange the continents into one large “supercontinent” on a sheet of construction paper. As you would with a jigsaw puzzle, arrange them so their edges fit together as closely as possible.
3. Label the pieces with the names of their present continents, and glue them onto the paper.
4. Use a globe or world map to locate the following mountains: Cascades, Andes, Atlas, Himalayas, Alps. Then draw these mountains on the supercontinent.
5. Use your textbook to locate volcanoes and places where earthquakes have occurred. Put a “V” in places where you know there are volcanoes, such as the Cascades. Put an “E” in places where you know that earthquakes have occurred, such as western North America.
6. Repeat steps 1-5 with second copy of the world map, but before gluing the continents to the construction paper, separate them by about 2.5 cm.
7. Glue the third world map copy onto a sheet of construction paper. Then place the three versions of the world map in order from the oldest to the youngest.

Journaling Suggestions: Describe what evidence students confirmed in this activity, that suggests that all of the continents were once joined together.

What happened:

Pressure from inside the Earth causes crustal movements, moving continents over long periods of time. All of the continents used to be joined together, and these slow movements separated the continents.