

Lesson 6: Theory of Plate Tectonics

Purpose: To obtain background information on the theory of plate tectonics

Guiding Questions: How does the theory of plate tectonics explain geologic events and features of earth's surface?

The theory of plate tectonics was first proposed in the 1960s. The theory states that the earth's lithosphere is divided into pieces called plates. The theory also explains why we have earthquakes, volcanoes, and other geologic features. This is supported by evidence that the plates move and interact with each other in a number of ways.

As we go through the slides, complete the data table.

The Plates

The Lithospheric Plates	
The major plates	
The largest plate	
Plates include	

How does the distance between two locations on one plate (e.g. New York and Chicago) change compared to the distance between two locations on separate plates (e.g. New York and London)?

What geologic events occur along plate boundaries?

Plate Boundaries	
Divergent	
Convergent	
Transform	