



Curiosity Guide #208

Plate Tectonics

Accompanies Curious Crew, Season 2, Episode 8 (#208)

Mud Makeover

Investigation #2

Description

Have you ever wondered what Earth was like a really long time ago?

Materials

- 2 aluminum cookie sheets
- 4 cups dirt
- Large bowl or planting pot
- Stirring stick
- Water
- Friends, after first pan dries out

Procedure 1

- 1) Prepare one pan ahead of time.
- 2) Pour 2 cups of dirt in a planting pot.
- 3) Add water to get mud.
- 4) Stir with a stirring stick.
- 5) Pour the mud "batter" onto the cookie sheet.
- 6) Press the mud with your hands to flatten it out.
- 7) Place the mud tray in the sun for several days to dry out.

Procedure 2, several days later

- 1) Prepare a second tray with friends.
- 2) Show your friends how the first pan dried out.
- 3) What do you notice?

My Results

Explanation

The sun dries out the mud by evaporating the water. You will notice leftover cracks, all over the surface, that resemble puzzle pieces.

It is thought that all of the land continents at one time were connected, just like these puzzle pieces. Due to internal pressures of the earth, the continents broke apart. The continents gradually shifted away from one another, making the continental plates that we know today.

Fun Vocabulary Stretcher: Can you imagine a massive supercontinent on Earth? That's what many scientists think Earth looked like, about 300 million years ago! We call this ancient supercontinent **Pangaea**.

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