Plate Tectonics

Continental Drift: Theory that the continents were at one or more times a single landmass that broke apart and eventually moved into the positions they are in today.

Pangaea: Single, giant landmass, or continent, that later broke apart

Mid–Ocean Ridge: Ocean-floor feature resembling a mountain ridge on land.

Seafloor Spreading: Process that forms new seafloor

Trench: Deep underwater canyon

Subduction Zone: Place where old oceanic crust is forced back down into an ocean trench towards the mantle.

Tectonic Plates: Large, solid piece of Earth’s surface (made of crust)

Theory of Plate Tectonics: Theory that states that Earth’s crust is broken into plates that float on the mantle

Convection Current: Movement of a gas or liquid caused by changes in temperature (how heat moves in the mantle)

Plate Boundary: Places where two tectonic plates meet.