

Vocabulary

Use the vocabulary words and definitions below as a reference for this unit.

abyssal plains large, flat regions deep on the ocean floor

canyons deep V-shaped valleys found along the continental slope

continental drift a hypothesis suggesting that the continents have moved and been in different positions through geologic time

continental shelf relatively flat part of the continent that is covered by seawater; lies between the coast and the continental slope

continental slope the steeply dipping surface between the outer edge of the continental shelf and the ocean basin proper

continents the seven major landmasses found on the surface of Earth

convection currents the circular movements of heat through liquids or gases

core the innermost layer of Earth which has two parts—the *outer* portion which is liquid and the *inner* portion which is solid

Vocabulary

- crust** the outer layer of Earth
- dome mountains** mountains formed when rocks are pushed up by internal forces within Earth
- earthquake** a sudden movement of Earth's crust
- epicenter** the point on the surface of Earth directly above the focus of an earthquake
- fault** a break in Earth's surface along which movement has occurred
- fault-block mountains** mountains formed by the movement of large amounts of rock along a crack in Earth's crust
- focus** the true center of an earthquake below Earth's surface
- folded mountains** mountains formed as a result of the bending of rocks in Earth's crust
- guyots (GEE-oze)** underwater volcanic mountains with flat tops
- lava** melted rock (magma) that comes to the surface of Earth
- lithosphere** the rigid outer layer of Earth, including the crust and upper mantle

Vocabulary

mountains	landforms that are at least 600 meters high
magma	melted (hot liquid) rock found inside Earth
mantle	the molten layer of Earth below the crust
mid-ocean ridge	mountain chain that rises from the ocean basins
mountains	landforms that are at least 600 meters high
Pangaea (pan-JEE-uh)	the large landmass that broke up and drifted to form our present-day continents
plates	pieces of Earth's crust that move about on the mantle
plate tectonics	theory stating that crustal plates on the surface of Earth are continuously moving due to convection currents
Richter scale	scale used to describe the strength of an earthquake
rift	a wide valley that separates two parallel chains of underwater mountains

Vocabulary

Ring of Fire	major earthquake zone that forms a ring around the Pacific Ocean; includes the western coasts of North America and South America and the eastern coast of Asia
seamounts	underwater cone-shaped volcanic mountains
seismic waves	waves by which energy moves away from the focus of an earthquake in all directions from the center
seismograph	an instrument used to measure earthquake activity
seismologist	a person who studies earthquakes
trenches	long, narrow cracks in the ocean floor that are the deepest parts of the ocean
volcanic mountains	mountains formed by volcanoes
volcano	a vent in Earth's crust through which hot, liquid rock erupts or oozes; a mountain formed of lava