

## OUR SHIFTING EARTH

### Reading Comprehension

- 1 What is the passage mainly about?
  - a. the most famous debate in the field of geology
  - b. how geologists arrived at the ideas behind the plate tectonics theory
  - c. Alfred Wegener's contributions to the theory of plate tectonics
  - d. what fossil evidence can tell us about the history of Earth
- 2 Which idea do the theories of continental drift and plate tectonics have in common?
  - a. Mid-ocean ridges are responsible for creating new earth.
  - b. Both continents and oceans rest atop moving plates.
  - c. Pangaea was the first manifestation of a supercontinent.
  - d. The positions of Earth's landmasses are not fixed.
- 3 What happens when two continental plates collide?
  - a. They break apart and move away from each other.
  - b. The fossils within them are dispersed.
  - c. Land is pushed up to create mountains.
  - d. New land is formed from cooling magma.
- 4 The word **plausible** in the passage is closest in meaning to
  - a. possible
  - b. identical
  - c. beneficial
  - d. simple
- 5 Which of the following was NOT part of Wegener's evidence in support of continental drift?
  - a. underwater maps created by marine sonar technology
  - b. geological correlations among disparate rock samples
  - c. similarities in the shapes of coastlines
  - d. remains of tropical life in Antarctica
- 6 What can be inferred about Antarctica?
  - a. There is a mid-ocean ridge near it.
  - b. It is the last remaining fragment of Pangaea.
  - c. It was once positioned close to the equator.
  - d. South America used to be attached directly to it.

# Summary

Step 1 Read the passage again and complete the outline with the words below.

similarities / fossil / evidence / Pangaea / moving / Wegener's  
plate tectonics / hypothesized / moving / continental drift / ridges

I. Earth's continents are constantly \_\_\_\_\_

A. First suggested by thinkers who noted \_\_\_\_\_ among coastlines

II. Alfred Wegener's work

A. \_\_\_\_\_ about a past supercontinent called \_\_\_\_\_

B. Collected rock and \_\_\_\_\_ evidence to support his idea

C. Introduced a theory of \_\_\_\_\_

D. His theory was rejected for lack of \_\_\_\_\_

III. The theory of \_\_\_\_\_

A. New sonar maps enabled the discovery of mid-ocean \_\_\_\_\_

B. Earth's surface is made up of multiple \_\_\_\_\_ plates

C. Finally proved \_\_\_\_\_ theory correct

Step 2 Complete the summary with your own words based on the outline.

Throughout Earth's history, the continents have been constantly \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The theory  
of plate tectonics finally proved Wegener's theory of \_\_\_\_\_ correct.