

Vocabulary

Abyssal Hill	Low, rounded submarine hill less than 1000 m high.
Abyssal Plain	Flat sections of the deep ocean floor.
Atoll	Seamount ringed with coral reefs.
Bathymetric	Measurement of depths of the oceans; also the data derived from such measurement, especially as compiled in a topographic map.
Bay	Partly enclosed body of water open to the sea or a lake.
Continental Drift	Theory proposed by Alfred Wegener in 1912 to explain the similarity of coastlines of Africa and South America and the similarity of fossils and rock formations found on both continents. Not taken seriously until mechanism for moving continents could be explained in the 1960's.
Continental Shelf	Submerged margin of the continents.
Continental Slope	Steep slope separating the continental shelf from the deep ocean basin.
Contour Line	Line joining points of equal elevation or depth on a surface or the representation of such a line on a map.
Convection Current	Pattern of movement in unevenly heated fluids.
Guyot	Flat topped volcano which has subsided beneath the water's surface.
Island	Relatively small land area surrounded by water.
Pangaea	The single supercontinent that began to break up 200 million years ago.
Plate tectonics	Theory that explains the way continents move over time: large pieces of the earth's crust, called "plates," move over the mantle below. Continents are located on the crustal plates and move with them. Although various theories have been proposed, the forces driving the movement of plates are unknown.
Rift valley	Trough formed by faulting where plates move apart, as in the midocean ridge.
Seamount	Underwater volcano which has not reached the water's surface.
Sounding	Measurement of depth of water beneath a ship.
Subduction Zone	Area where one crustal plate slips beneath another.
Trench	Long, narrow, deep depression in the seafloor associated with a subduction zone.
Volcanic Island Arc	Series of volcanic islands found along a subduction zone.