

GLOSSARY

A

asthenosphere zone of mantle beneath the lithosphere that consists of slowly flowing solid rock (72)

C

continental crust material that makes up landmasses (72)

continental drift hypothesis stating that the continents once formed a single landmass, broke up, and drifted to their present locations (67)

convection transfer of heat through the movement of heated material (74)

convection current movement in a fluid caused by uneven heating (74)

convergent boundary border formed by the collision of two lithospheric plates (73)

D

divergent boundary boundary formed by two lithospheric plates that are moving apart (73)

I

island arc chain of volcanic islands formed along an ocean trench (74)

L

lithosphere thin outer shell of the Earth consisting of the crust and the rigid upper mantle (72)

M

Mid-Atlantic Ridge undersea mountain range with a steep, narrow valley along its center (68)

mid-ocean ridges system of undersea mountain ranges that wind around the Earth (68)

O

ocean trench deep valley in the ocean floor that forms along a subduction zone (73)

GLOSSARY

oceanic crust material that makes up the ocean floor (72)

● P

Pangaea single landmass thought to have been the origin of all continents (67)

Panthalassa giant ocean surrounding Pangaea (67)

plate tectonics theory that the lithosphere is made up of plates that float on the asthenosphere and that the plates possibly are moved by convection currents (72)

● R

rift valley steep, narrow valley formed as lithospheric plates separate (73)

● S

seafloor spreading movement of the ocean floor away from either side of a mid-ocean ridge (70)

subduction zone region where one lithospheric plate moves under another (73)

● T

terrane piece of land with a geologic history distinct from that of the surrounding land (76)

theory of microplate terranes theory that continents are a patchwork of pieces of land that have individual geologic histories (76)

transform boundary boundary formed where two lithospheric plates slide past each other (74)