TALK ABOUT TEXTS

# Exploring the Seven Continents



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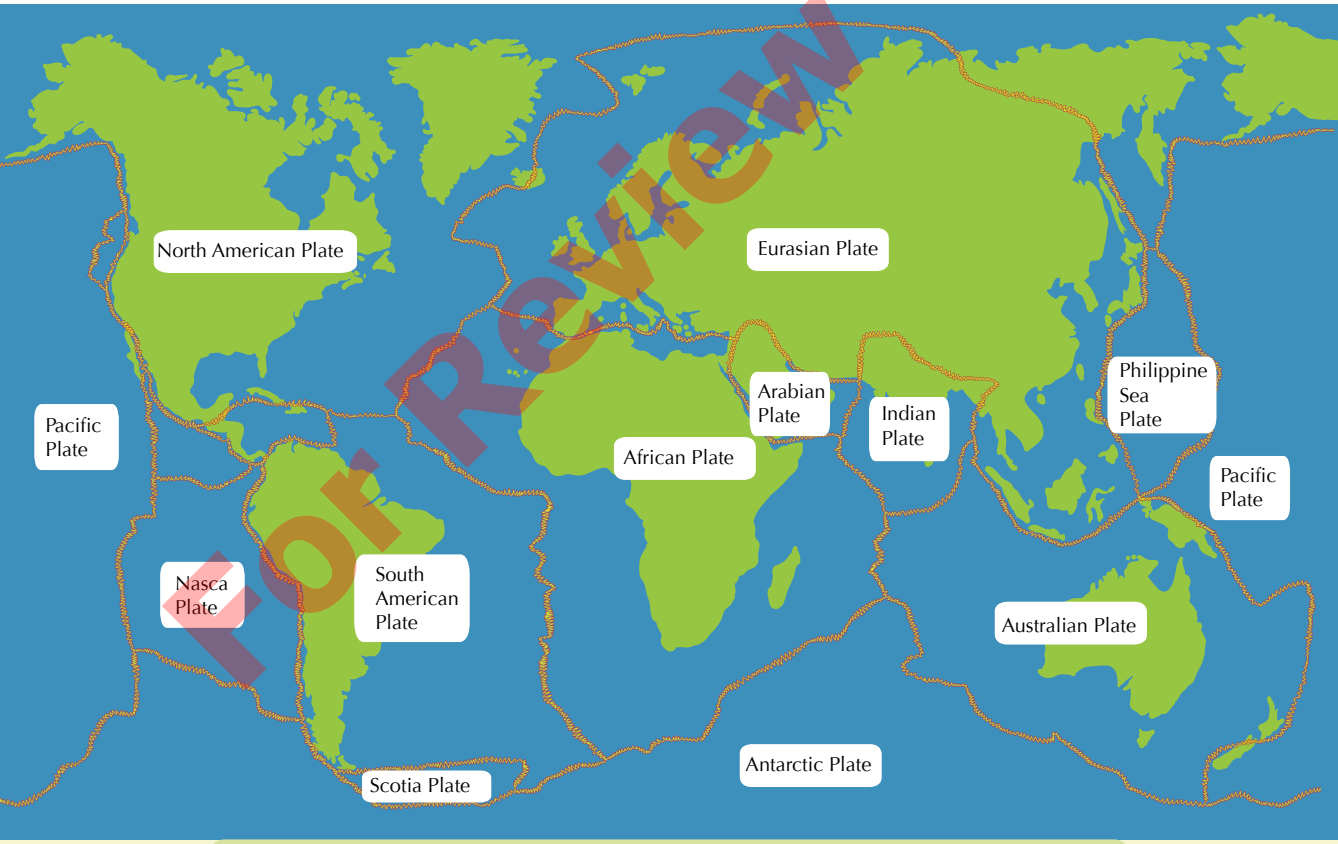
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# Earth's Crust

The hard outer layer of the Earth is called its crust. It is made up of several large chunks called **plates**. The plates fit together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. They lie mostly under the ocean, but large masses of land rise above them. These landmasses are called continents.

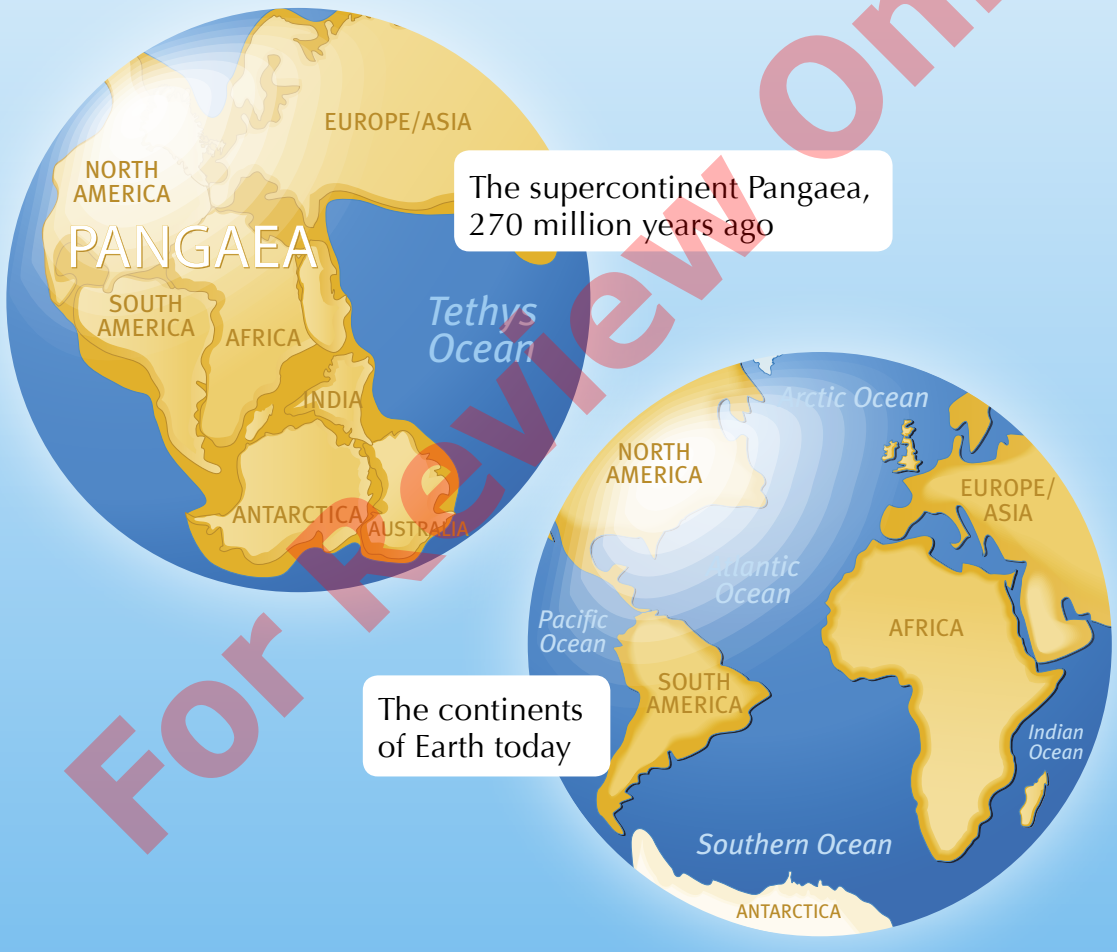



This map shows the borders of the plates that make up the surface of Earth.

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# Changing Earth

Millions of years ago, Earth looked different. It had one supercontinent called Pangaea (*pan-jee-a*). Pangaea was surrounded by ocean.



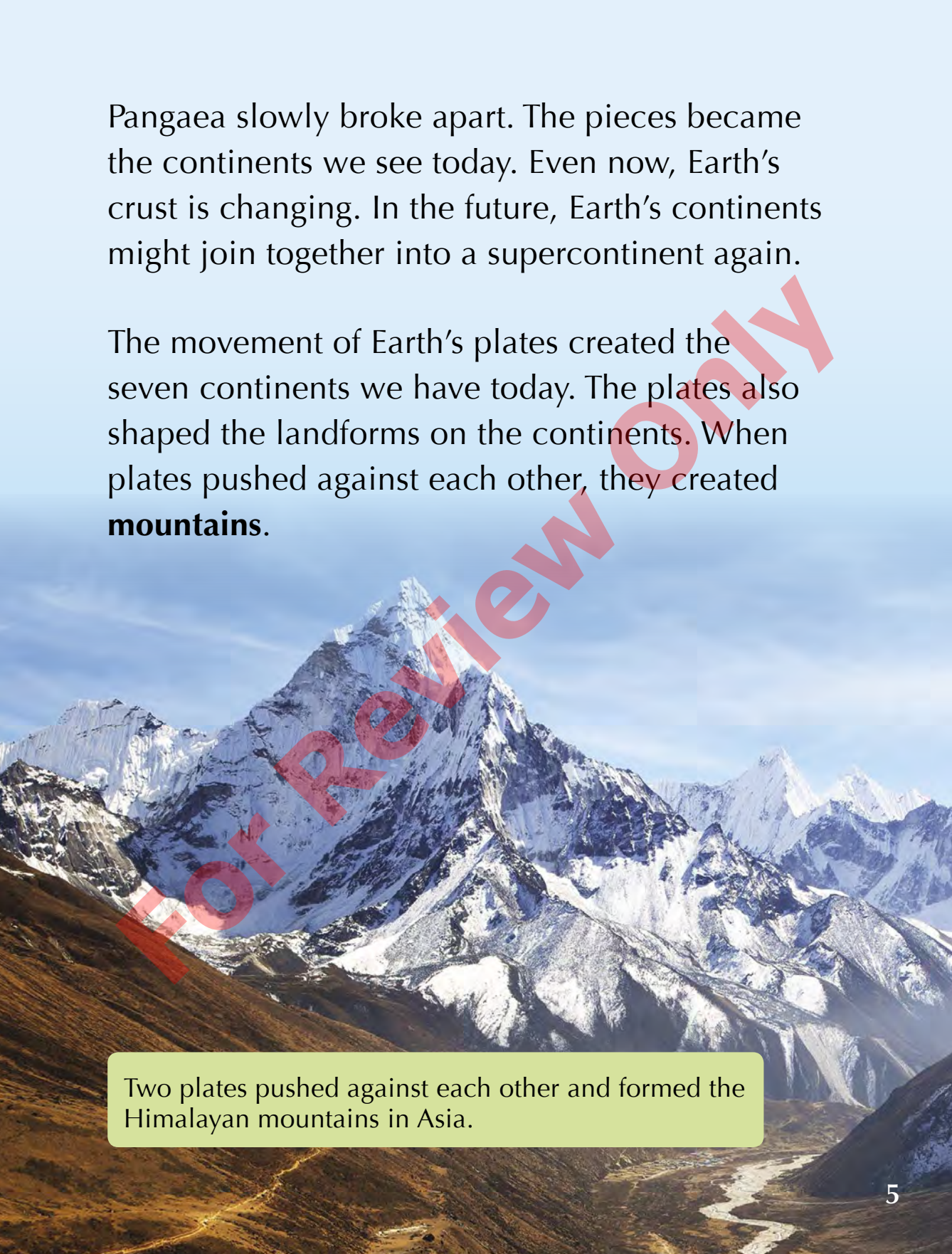

The supercontinent Pangaea broke apart and ended up forming the continents we have today.

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Pangaea slowly broke apart. The pieces became the continents we see today. Even now, Earth's crust is changing. In the future, Earth's continents might join together into a supercontinent again.

The movement of Earth's plates created the seven continents we have today. The plates also shaped the landforms on the continents. When plates pushed against each other, they created **mountains**.

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Two plates pushed against each other and formed the Himalayan mountains in Asia.

# The Seven Continents

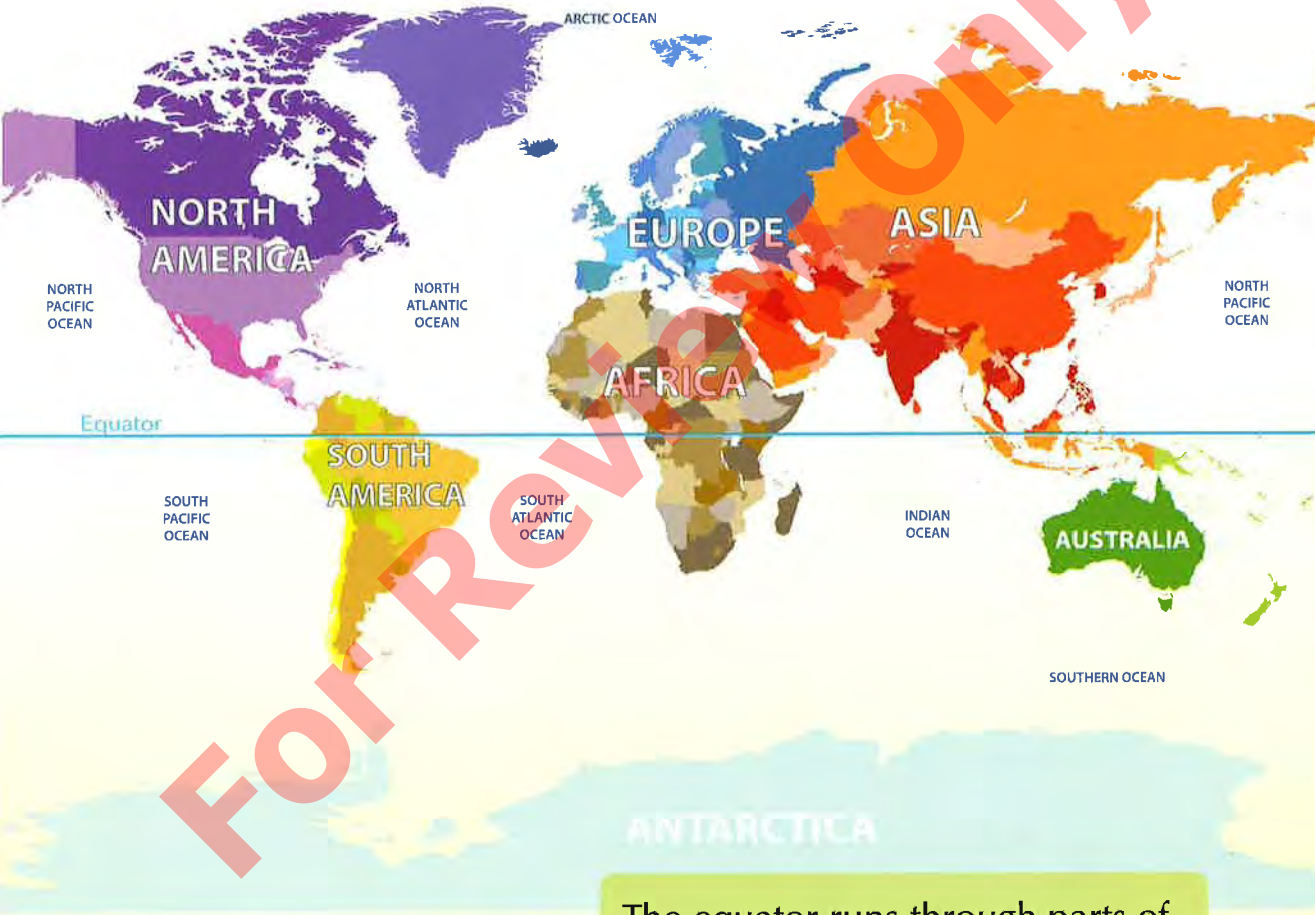
Today, we say Earth has seven continents. They are North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and Antarctica. Some continents are very close to each other. It is unclear where they begin and end.




Europe and Asia are joined together, but most people say the Ural Mountains are the border between them.

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The location of each continent affects its climate. Land near the North and South Poles has colder weather. Land near the Equator has warmer weather.




The equator runs through parts of South America, Africa and Asia.

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# North America



North America is in the Northern Hemisphere. It lies between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. It has mountains, lakes, canyons and grassy **plains** called prairies. The climate is good for growing **crops** such as oranges, cotton and corn.

The Colorado River flows through the Grand Canyon in the United States.

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