

# Do continents move?

In the 1912 a German scientist named Alfred Wegener had a theory that the earth's crust did not always look the same. Wegener



thought that a long time ago, the continents were closer together. Wegener looked at maps, and he thought that some of the continents fit together (like the pieces of a puzzle). Alfred Wegener did more research to try to prove his theory.

Wegener looked at fossils found on different continents. He found some fossils from animals that could not swim, but



were somehow separated by a whole ocean.

How did the fossils end up on 2 different continents, separated by a ocean? Wegener thought that since the animals could not swim, the 2 continents must have been much closer a long time ago.

Other scientist thought Alfred Wegener was crazy. How could whole continents move 1000s of miles? Alfred froze to death in 1930 during a journey crossing the Greenland ice cap. The controversy he started lasted for many years. After his death, new evidence from ocean floor exploration and other studies rekindled interest in Wegener's theory, ultimately leading to the development of the *theory of plate tectonics*.