

SUPPLEMENT A: PHENOMENA INFORMATION PACKET (6 OF 6)

Corresponding Rock Sequences

Wegener noticed that South America and Africa appear to fit together like a puzzle. If the Atlantic Ocean were not in the middle, these continents could nestle together. Not only did the coastlines appear to fit together—an analysis of the types and sequences of rocks along each of the coasts of these two continents revealed striking similarities. For example, imagine that the layers of rock on the South American continent were (from oldest to youngest) basalt, limestone, coal, shale. Scientists were surprised to discover the exact same sequence along the African coastline.

How could two places, so far apart and divided by an ocean, have the same rock sequences?

What conclusions can you draw from this single piece of information about the pattern of rock sequence on different continents? What more do you want to know? Answer the questions on Activity Sheet 2.1.

