

Examples of Ecotours

There are many different types of ecotours! Here are a few examples:

Eco Treks

Eco treks use a guide to lead a group of hikers around significant places. The guides are able to show the tourists sites that have historical or geological importance. For example, you can take an eco trek though the foothills of the Himalayas and learn about the culture of Tibet.



Agrotourism

Agrotourism allows tourists to visit a local farm and be part of the operations. This might include getting a chance to plant or harvest a local crop. Visitors also have an opportunity to learn more about the crop's importance to local culture. This could include getting to taste the food or try other products associated with the crop. For example, you can travel to Greece to harvest olives and help turn them into olive oil!



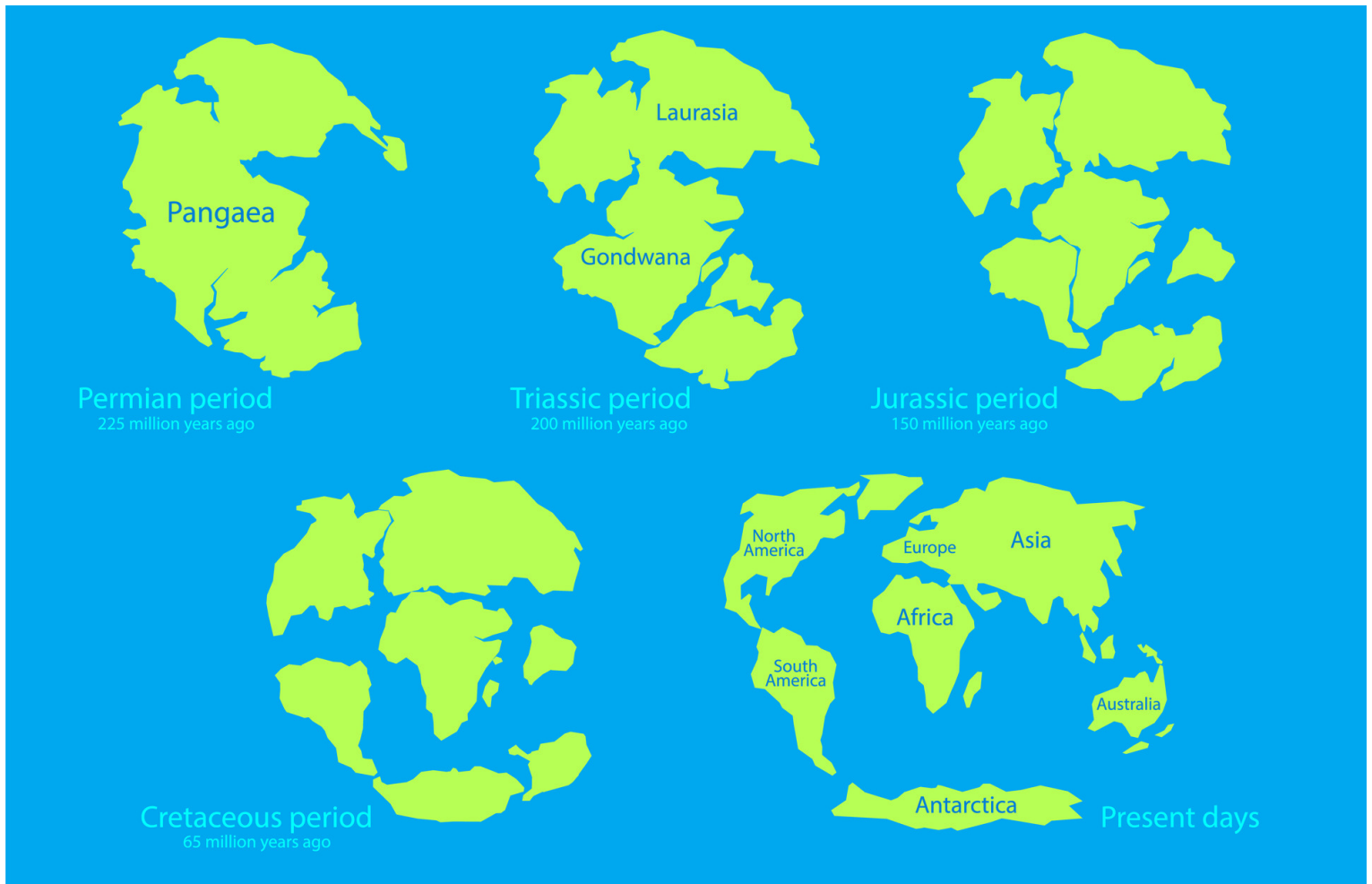
Archaeological Digs

Some archaeological digs allow visitors to come and participate in an active dig! Trained scientists teach tourists the basics about how to carefully unearth ancient artifacts, and then the tourists get a chance to dig on their own! For example, you can help find artifacts from the ancient Maya civilization in Mexico!



Learning About Pangea

Millions of years ago, the continents were connected in a large “super-continent” called Pangea. Over time, the Earth's plates shifted and caused the continents to break apart.



Creating an Ecotour

Follow the steps to create an ecotour that is part adventurous and part educational.

Step 1: Choose a location

Choose a location where your ecotour will be located. Your ecotour will focus on how the history of this location provides evidence for how Earth's plates moved over time.

Location #1: Myanmar, Asia

Myanmar is located in the Northern Hemisphere. An ancient beetle, called *Propiestus*, is only found in and around Myanmar. However, a modern relative of *Propiestus* is only found in the Southern Hemisphere. Since these two beetles are related, they most likely used to live in places that were close in distance to one another. However, currently Myanmar is thousands of miles away from the nearest continent in the Southern Hemisphere. This suggests that Myanmar was once connected to the Southern Hemisphere!



Location #2: Grand Canyon, Arizona, USA

The Grand Canyon, located in Arizona, is one of the largest canyons in the world. A visitor can look at the Grand Canyon and see clear rock layers from top to bottom. Matching rock formations have been found on the island of Tasmania, an island located off of the coast of Australia. As different events happen on Earth's surface (volcanic eruptions, earthquakes), Earth's surface changes. New layers of rock are formed and each layer is made up of a specific mixture of materials. Scientists tested different rock layers in the Grand Canyon and in Tasmania to see what they are made of. They found the same mixture in both places, which suggests that Arizona and Tasmania were once connected!



Location #3: Guadalupe Peak, Texas, USA

Guadalupe, Texas has a dry climate and is home to the highest peak in the entire state; Guadalupe Peak. On the top of Guadalupe Peak, scientists have found thousands of tiny fossils! The fossils were all from marine organisms. How did fossils from ocean-dwelling animals end up on the top of a mountain? The fossils provide evidence that Texas was actually under water millions of years ago. As the continents have moved and shifted, Guadalupe Peak was raised up out of the ocean!



Lesson: Tours for Visitors

Step 2: Create an Adventure Part of the Tour

For each location, visitors will arrive at a visitors' center. They will then take a zip line to an educational site where they will attend a presentation. Your zip line must have the following components:

- Platforms for people to stand on before and after they ride the zip line.



- Cable that is at least 16 inches long that is attached to both sides of the platform.



- Trolley for people to hold on to while they are carried along the zip line. Your trolley must be able to move along the cable you create.



Extra Time?

Most zip lines have an emergency brake to stop the rider if there is an emergency. Use art supplies and building materials to create an emergency brake to attach on to your zip line.

Step 3: Create an Educational Part of the Tour

After visitors take the zip line, they will arrive at educational site where they will attend your presentation!

First, choose how you will present information to the tourists. Each presentation will help the tourists understand your location's connection to Earth's plates movements over time.

- Poster presentation - Use a piece of poster board to create a poster that will hang in the visitor's center.
- Music video or rap- Create a video that will play in the visitor's center.
- Create model fossils that will help visitors understand the history of your site.
- Something else - Have another idea about how to share the information about the history of your location?

Great! Make sure to get your teacher's permission first!

Then, create a presentation! Your presentation must include the following components:

- Description of the location.
- How the evidence shows plate movement over time.
- Include exciting information about your ecotour. Make sure people know they chose a good tour!

Your presentation can be in following formats:

- Lecture style: You will need a large sheet of paper or poster board to write out your descriptions and claims. Cut out the sources and put them on the paper/poster to display them.
- Technology style: You will need a tablet or iPhone. Have your teacher download the sources onto the computer, tablet, or iPhone.
- Other style: Come up with another way to present information to your visitors. You will need to get approval from your teacher before moving forward.