

## GEOGRAPHY · CHAPTER 4

# Distribution of Oceans and Continents

A 1-page guide for parents · 90-second read.

EXPECTED MARKS

**7 marks**

TIME TO MASTER

**5-7 hrs**

HELPLINE

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### WHAT THIS CHAPTER IS, IN PLAIN ENGLISH

This chapter answers a big question: why are the continents and oceans arranged the way they are? Your child learns the story of a great scientific idea. In 1912 Alfred Wegener suggested that today's continents were once joined in one giant landmass (Pangaea) surrounded by one ocean, and have slowly drifted apart. He had clever evidence — coastlines that fit like jigsaw pieces, matching rocks and identical fossils on continents now separated by oceans — but he could not explain WHAT force moved them, so scientists rejected his idea for decades. Later discoveries (convection currents inside the earth, and 'sea-floor spreading' where new ocean floor is born at underwater mountain ridges) finally proved him broadly right, leading to today's accepted theory of PLATE TECTONICS — that the earth's surface is broken into giant moving plates. The chapter ends with India's own dramatic journey from the southern hemisphere up to Asia, a crash that raised the Himalayas. It is worth about 5-7 marks.

### 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- What were Pangaea and Panthalassa, and who proposed the idea?
- Why was Wegener's theory rejected for so many years?
- Name three pieces of evidence that the continents were once joined.
- What is sea-floor spreading, and where does new ocean floor form?
- How did the Himalayas form according to plate tectonics?

### WEAK-SPOT INDICATORS

- Mixes up Pangaea (land) with Panthalassa (water), or Laurasia with Gondwanaland.
- Cannot explain why Wegener's theory was rejected (the forces were too weak).
- Confuses continental drift with plate tectonics — thinks they are the same theory.
- Cannot name the three types of plate boundary or give an example of each.

### WHEN TO WORRY — AND WHAT TO DO

This chapter has a clear story-line, so students who learn it as a sequence (drift → why rejected → spreading → plate tectonics) do well, while those who memorise scattered facts struggle to write the 5-mark answer. If your child can recognise the terms but cannot tell the story in order, drill the sequence with them using a diagram.

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