Geography – Tectonics Knowledge Organiser

1. Key terms

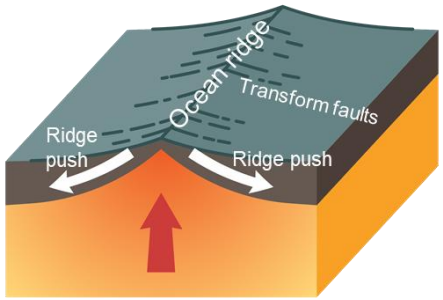
Core	Made up of the outer and inner core. These are the hottest layers.
Epicenter	The area on the surface, directly above the earthquake's focus.
Focus	The location in the lithosphere where the earthquake starts.
Lithosphere	The upper layer of the Earth, which is divided into tectonic plates. It is made up of continental (thick) and oceanic (thinner) lithosphere.
Mantle	The semi-solid layer of Earth, which is underneath the lithosphere.

2. Key terms

Mountain belts	Long belts of mountain ranges that form along convergent plate boundaries.
Ocean ridge	Long ridges that form along divergent plate boundaries, underneath oceans.
Ocean trench	Deep areas of ocean that form when oceanic lithosphere subducts into the mantle.
Slab pull	Tectonic plates are dragged by oceanic lithosphere as it subducts into the mantle. This is what causes tectonic plates to move.
Subduction	When an oceanic plate goes down into the mantle. Only oceanic lithosphere can subduct.

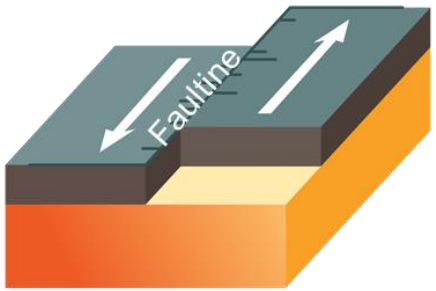
3. Plate Boundaries

Constructive plate boundaries



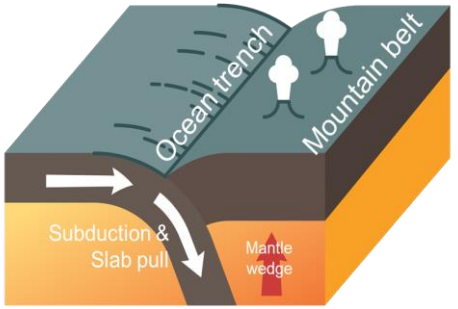
Example – North American and Eurasian plate – North Atlantic Ridge

Conservative plate boundaries



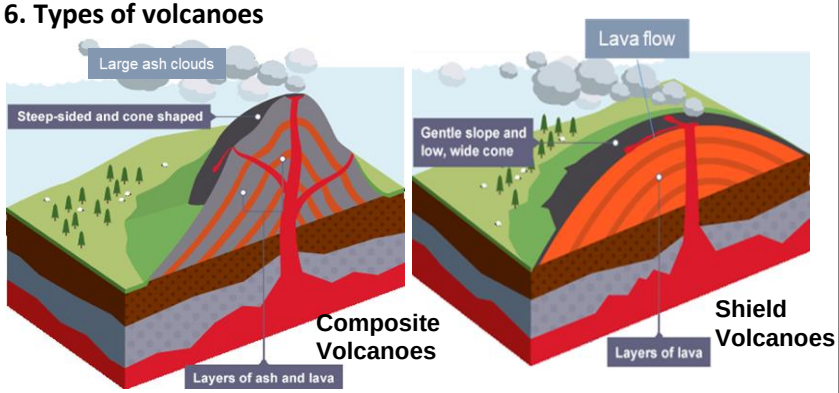
Example – North American and Pacific Plate – San Andreas Fault

4. Destructive plate boundary



Example – Nazca plate and South American Plate

5. Features and hazards at different plate boundaries

Plate boundary	Features	Hazards
Convergent (Continental – continental)	Mountain belts or Fold mountains	Earthquakes
Destructive (Oceanic – continental)	Mountain belts or Fold mountains. Ocean trench	Earthquakes Volcanoes
Constructive	Ocean ridge	Volcanoes Mild earthquakes
Conservative	Visible deformations along the fault line	Earthquakes

6. Types of volcanoes