

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Exploring Our Amazing Planet: Earth

### Short Answer Key

1. Earth's atmosphere is composed mainly of nitrogen (about 78%) and oxygen (about 21%). It is crucial for life because it provides the oxygen we breathe, helps regulate temperature, and shields us from harmful solar radiation.
2. Continents: Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Antarctica, Europe, Australia. Oceans: Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Southern Ocean, Arctic Ocean.
3. The water cycle is a continuous process where water evaporates from bodies of water, forms clouds, falls as precipitation (rain or snow), and flows back into bodies of water through runoff. It is important because it helps distribute fresh water around the planet, sustaining life.
4. Plate tectonics is the movement of Earth's tectonic plates, which causes geological changes such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and the formation of mountains. It shapes the Earth's surface over long periods.
5. Biodiversity is essential because it ensures the health and resilience of ecosystems. Ecosystems, which consist of various species interacting with their environment, help maintain balance in nature by providing food, regulating climate, and more.

