

CLAIM TESTING – EVIDENCE

Preparation

- Download “Alfred Wegener & Harry Hess”

Purpose

In this final activity in the claim testing progression, you will dig into evidence and how evidence impacts what people decide to believe. This should help you better understand how the situation and context in which claims are made and supported impact which claim tester or testers are used.

Practices

Reading

As you read the article about Wegener and Hess, you will look for supporting evidence for claims being made about continental drift. This is a great opportunity to think about how when testing claims that we find in articles, we tend to test them using the support that the author provided. Sometimes it’s helpful to corroborate that information, or look beyond just what the author provided to find further supporting or disconfirming evidence related to the author’s claim.



Process

If you haven’t already read “Alfred Wegener & Harry Hess,” read it now. You will need the background knowledge from that article to complete this quick activity.

Think about this claim: Evidence is the best of the four claim testers.

Based on what you know, do you agree or disagree with this claim?

Let’s test your answer, and the claim, by using the story of Wegener and Hess.

Take out the Claim Testing – Evidence Worksheet, and, working in groups, answer the questions. When you’re done, you will be asked to share your final response to the claim, “Evidence is the best of the four claim testers” with the class.



CLAIM TESTING – EVIDENCE

Name:

Date:

1. What kinds of evidence did Wegener have to support his theory of continental drift?

2. What kinds of evidence did Hess have to support the theory of continental drift?

3. As you know, people believed Hess and not Wegener. Was Hess's evidence really that much better?

4. Imagine that Hess and Wegener had equally good evidence – did people see Hess as an authority, but not Wegener?

5. Now that you've considered a variety of factors that influence what people decide to believe, revisit the claim you're testing as part of this activity: "Evidence is the best of the four claim testers." Explain why your group believes this claim is either true, false, or if you need more information or context to respond to the claim.

