**Letter to a Friend Project**

**Introduction:**

*After learning about all things related to oceanography, you run to your friend and share all your new information. Your friend, however, is skeptical if all of what you’re saying is true. He/she begins to question if the claims you are making are accurate. You begin to shut down because you realize you don’t have any evidence to back up your claims. You walk away disappointed, hoping for another chance to convince your friend that all of what you have learned is the truth. You decide to write him/her a letter as a response to your conversation.*

**Directions:**

In this assignment, you will be writing a letter to your friend validating the claims you have learned (and therefore made) about the current understandings of how the Earth, oceans, and continents were formed. You will need to research evidence that backs up your claims on these ideas and justify your evidence with reasoning. In addition to your research, you will use what you have learned in class as a basis for your claims. Your claims will address the following questions:

1. How and when was Earth formed?
2. How and when did oceans form on the planet?
3. How and when did our current continents form?

In your letter, you will need to include 5 paragraphs: an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Your body paragraphs should address the questions above by stating a claim, supporting your claim with evidence, and provide reasoning as to why the evidence supports your claim. While the main purpose of this letter is to use evidence and reasoning to analyze these ideas, it is also important that you write your letter in a persuasive manner. While science is inherently an objective discipline, it is important that the communication of scientific ideas be convincing.

**Grading:**

Your grade will be determined based on the content of your claim, evidence, and reasoning, along with your general writing conventions, including grammar and sentence structure. Body paragraphs should contain at least 5 sentences and the overall length of your letter should be at least two pages (handwritten) or one page (single-space typed).