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ROCK LAYER FOLDING EXPERIMENT

Although the land you stand on seems like it is firmly in place, it is actually moving. The Earth's crust is divided up into pieces that are called "plates." These plates are slowly moving around the Earth. While they are moving they sometimes bump into one another which causes the rocks on the plates to fold and push their way into mountains.

This is a simple experiment that is great for showing the possible effects when pressure is applied to horizontal rock layers.

You Will Need:

- Play-doh or Clay in several colors
- Rolling pin or can of soda



To Do the Experiment:

Form several different colors of Play-doh or softened modeling clay into even layers.

Once you have a stack of layers, push the ends of the "rock layers" together to see what happens. Depending on the amount of pressure that is applied and the direction that you hold your hands you will see forms such as synclines and anticlines.

Synclines are formed when the ends of the rock layers are turned up and the layers form a "U" shape.

Anticlines are formed when the ends of the rock layers are turned down and the layers form an "n" shape.

Variations:

Try forming some layers that are thick and some that are thin to see if there is a different in the effects of the pressure.



Rock layers which are very long may form both synclines and anticlines so try the experiment with different lengths of "rock layers" to see if both shapes will form.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU ARE A TRUE MINI ME GEOLOGIST!

