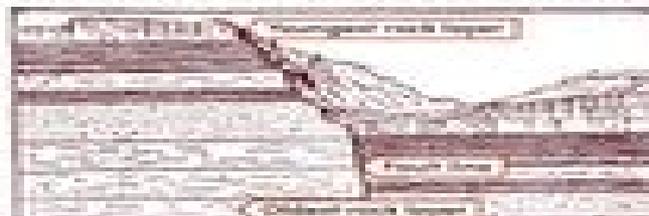


GEOLOGIC TIME SCALE

Read the text, and then answer the questions that follow.

Have you ever wondered how old our planet is? Scientists certainly have! Scientists who specialize in studying Earth's physical structure and history, called **geologists**, estimate that Earth is about 4.6 billion years old. This estimate is based on a thorough analysis of rock layers and the fossil record.

Geologists describe the age of a rock in two ways: relative age and absolute age. The **relative age** of a rock is its age compared to the ages of other rocks. **Absolute age** is the number of years that have passed since the rock formed, and it is calculated through a process called radioactive dating. By studying clues in Earth's rocks and determining their ages, geologists can organize past events into a sequence called the **geologic time scale**.



To find a rock's relative age, geologists use a number of different clues:

- The **law of superposition** states that, in undisturbed horizontal sedimentary rock layers, the oldest layer is at the bottom and the youngest layer is at the top.
- Lava that hardens on Earth's surface forms an igneous **extrusion**. An extrusion is younger than the rock it covers.
- Magma that pushes into layers of rock below Earth's surface and hardens forms an igneous **intrusion**. An intrusion is younger than the rock around it.
- A **fault** is a break in Earth's crust caused by forces inside the Earth. A fault is always younger than the rock it cuts through.
- **Index fossils** are fossils of an organism that was widely distributed and existed for a geologically short period of time. Geologists infer that rock layers with matching index fossils are the same age.

Use the information you learned from the passage to answer the questions below.

1. Look at the image to the right. A fault was created in the rock layers during an earthquake. Did the earthquake occur before or after sedimentary rock layers A, B, and C were deposited? Explain.



2. A geologist finds the same type of index fossil in a rock layer in Kansas and in a rock layer over 7,000 miles away in the Himalayan foothills. What can she infer about the ages of the two rock layers?

Geologic Time Answer Key

J Elliott



Geologic Time Answer Key:

Geologic Time Scale 2020 Felix Gradstein, James G. Ogg, Mark D. Schmitz, Gabi M. Ogg, 2020-10-30 Geologic Time Scale 2020 2 volume set contains contributions from 80 leading scientists who present syntheses in an easy to understand format that includes numerous color charts maps and photographs In addition to detailed overviews of chronostratigraphy evolution geochemistry sequence stratigraphy and planetary geology the GTS2020 volumes have separate chapters on each geologic period with compilations of the history of divisions the current GSSPs global boundary stratotypes detailed bio geochem sequence correlation charts and derivation of the age models The authors are on the forefront of chronostratigraphic research and initiatives surrounding the creation of an international geologic time scale The included charts display the most up to date international standard as ratified by the International Commission on Stratigraphy and the International Union of Geological Sciences As the framework for deciphering the history of our planet Earth this book is essential for practicing Earth Scientists and academics Completely updated geologic time scale Provides the most detailed integrated geologic time scale available that compiles and synthesizes information in one reference Gives insights on the construction strengths and limitations of the geological time scale that greatly enhances its function and its utility

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H. Jordan,2014-04-04 For the introductory geology or physical geology course Understanding Earth offers both majors and non majors rock solid content that originated with the ground breaking text Earth In subsequent editions the text has consistently met the needs of today s students with exceptional content currency interactive learning features and an overall focus of the role of geological science in our lives Understanding Earth doesn t merely present the concepts and processes of physical geology the authors focus on how we know what we know Students actively take part in the scientific process of discovery and learn through experience as they explore the impact of geology on their lives as citizens and future stewards of the planet The new edition incorporates coverage of recent natural disasters the 2011 tsunami fracking and other natural resources issues the latest developments in climate change and key events such as the Mars mission and the arrest of geologists in Italy

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