

## **Earth Science**

### **Activity 16: Write an Opinion Essay**

#### **Topic 23: Plate Tectonics and Today's Earth**

#### **General Instructions:**

- Use a computer to complete your essay/document.
- Write a “five-part” 250-400 word essay in a single 40-minute session.
- Include an introduction, three key supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors prior to completing work.
- Submit or share your final document with your instructor.

#### **Suggestions and Tips:**

1. Read the background and context provided to familiarize yourself with the subject area.
2. Select either A or B as the basis for your thesis.
3. Plan the essay prior to writing it.
4. Make the essay organized. Avoid placing multiple points in one paragraph.
5. Use only Times New Roman font 12 with double-spacing to format your document.
6. Discuss only one perspective in each of the body paragraphs.
7. Conclude with a summary.
8. In the summary, rephrase the introduction and thesis. Emphasize key supporting rationale.

**Background and Context:**

The San Andreas Fault is about 1,200 kilometers long. The distance of 1,200 kilometers is equal to about 750 miles. The fault passes through much of California. The fault forms a large portion of the tectonic boundary between the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate.

A recent study says the San Andreas Fault may result in another large earthquake. The study was published in a reputable science journal. It says the fault has reached a stress level for an earthquake of greater than 7.0.

According to the study, a massive earthquake there would cause major damage. The area is highly populated. These areas continue to grow in population even though people know about the risk. An earthquake would cause extensive damage to their property, highways and local roadways.

**Position A** – Additional, future growth in the area known to be at risk should stop. Government should intervene and prohibit future growth in the area.

**Position B** – Decisions about additional growth in the area should be left up to individuals who would be directly impacted.