Graham Cracker Plate Tectonics

Purpose: The students will use icing, graham crackers to simulate the motion of tectonic plates at convergent, divergent, and transform boundaries.

TEKS: 6.10C,D and 8.9B

Directions:
1. Give each group wax paper, two graham crackers, and a dollop of icing.
2. First the student will place the crackers about ½ an inch apart on the icing. They will then press down while pulling the crackers apart. This represents the mid-Atlantic ridge, a divergent boundary.
3. Next they will place two new pieces side by side and slide them past each other while applying pressure. They will crumble at the boundary representing a transform boundary, such as the San Andreas Fault.

4. Next have one student push the cracker down into the icing, and have the other student push the floating cracker over the first cracker. This represents subduction at a convergent boundary. This kind of boundary is found where the Nazca plate meets the South American Plate.

5. Finally have the student put two pieces of graham crackers on the wax paper touching each other. Get the boundaries wet, but only the boundaries, leave the rest of the crackers dry. Have the students push the two crackers together. This represents convergent boundaries (continental, continental) and mountain building. This kind of motion is what forms the Himalayan Mountains.

6. Be sure to have students draw and label each type of motion in their journal.