

# Voyage to peer into the centre of the Earth

British scientists have embarked on a mission to study a huge spot on the Atlantic seabed where the Earth's crust is mysteriously missing – an enigma that defies geophysical theory and provides an unprecedented peek at the planet's interior

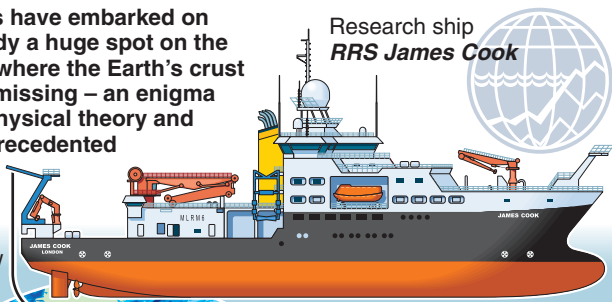
## ATLANTIC SPOT:

**Depth:** 3km below ocean surface

**Width:**

Thousands of square km

Research ship  
**RRS James Cook**



## Mid-Atlantic Ridge:

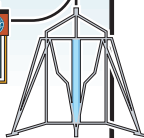
Eurasian and American continental plates drift apart, creating volcanic rift

**TOBI:** Deep-towed sidescan sonar will map sea floor



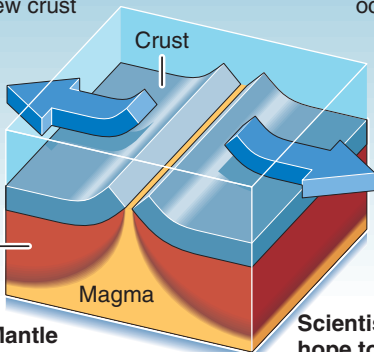
## BRIDGE:

Robot will land on mantle and drill into rock to take samples

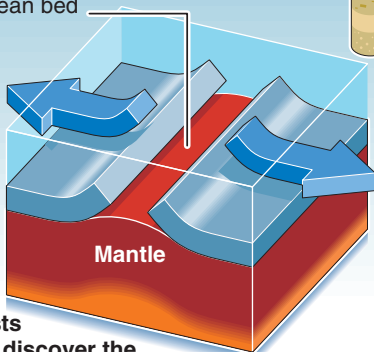


## SEA FLOOR SPREADING:

Usually, tectonic plates shift apart and magma wells up, forming new crust



**ATLANTIC SPOT:** Crust not formed – Earth's mantle exposed on ocean bed



**Cores:** Provide evidence of mantle dynamics



**Mantle**

Sources: NOCS, BGS  
© GRAPHIC NEWS

Scientists hope to discover the mystery of the Atlantic's missing crust