Inside the Earth

Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

The Earth is about 12,750 kilometers (km) across. No one has ever seen the bottom of its crust, but scientists have learned that the Earth is made of layers, a little like a boiled egg.

The outside layer is the crust. It is like the shell of the egg: thin, hard and brittle, so it can break. Under the oceans the crust is only about 5 km thick. Under the continents it is about 30 km thick, and under big mountain ranges it can reach 100 km.

Below the crust is the mantle, like the white of the egg. It is hot, dense rock, about 2,900 km thick. The deeper you go inside the Earth, the hotter it gets, and the harder the rock above presses down.

In the middle is the core, made of metal, mostly iron and nickel. Unlike the yolk of an egg, it has two parts. The outer core is liquid. As the Earth turns, the outer core spins, and this makes the Earth's magnetic field. The inner core is solid.

1. **What is the outside layer of the Earth called?**

2. **How thick is the mantle?**

3. **What happens when the outer core spins as the Earth turns?**

4. **The passage says the crust is like the shell of an egg. How are they alike?**

Answer key

Inside the Earth

1. What is the outside layer of the Earth called?
   The crust.

2. How thick is the mantle?
   About 2,900 km.

3. What happens when the outer core spins as the Earth turns?
   It makes the Earth's magnetic field.

4. The passage says the crust is like the shell of an egg. How are they alike?
   Sample answer: both are a thin, hard layer on the outside, and both can break.