

Name: _____

Date: _____

My Time Machine

I wish I could build a time machine. I want to go to the future and see how my town has changed. I want to go to the past and see what Earth looked like a really long time ago.

I told my teacher about my idea. He liked it, but he said I don't need a time machine to visit the past. He told me to study rocks. Rocks hold clues about what Earth was like long ago.

A sedimentary rock is like a history lesson. Long ago, sediment piled up in layers. Sediment is tiny bits of rocks and minerals. It can also contain parts of once-living things. As more and more layers piled up, the bottom layers were pressed together. The pressed-together sediment hardened. It formed sedimentary rock.

Limestone and sandstone are sedimentary rocks. Most limestone formed from the remains of ocean animals and plants that pile up on the ocean floor. How do you think

sandstone formed? You guessed it! It formed from sandy sediment.

When I look at rocks, I imagine watching them form. I see sediment. I see layers form. I see the layers pressing together and hardening. In my mind, this takes only minutes. But in nature, the process takes a very long time.

Questions:

1. What is sediment?
2. What is needed for sediment to form rock?
3. How do limestone and sandstone compare?



Credit: Parmna/Shutterstock.com

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Mi máquina del tiempo

Desearía poder construir una máquina del tiempo. Quiero ir al futuro y ver cómo ha cambiado mi ciudad. Quiero ir al pasado y ver qué aspecto tenía la Tierra hace mucho, mucho tiempo.

Le comenté a mi profesor sobre mi idea. Le gustó, pero dijo que no necesitaba una máquina del tiempo para visitar el pasado. Me dijo que estudiara las rocas. Las rocas tienen pistas acerca de cómo era la Tierra hace mucho tiempo.

Una roca sedimentaria es como una lección de historia. Hace mucho tiempo, los sedimentos se amontonaron en capas. Los sedimentos son trozos diminutos de rocas y minerales. También pueden contener trozos de seres que alguna vez estuvieron vivos. Al irse amontonando cada vez más capas, las inferiores se unieron por la presión. Los sedimentos bajo presión se endurecieron. Formaron rocas sedimentarias.

La piedra caliza y la arenisca son rocas sedimentarias. La mayoría de la piedra caliza se formó a partir de los restos de animales y plantas oceánicos que se acumularon en el

lecho oceánico. ¿Cómo crees que se formó la arenisca? ¡Adivinaste! Se formó a partir de sedimento arenoso.

Cuando veo rocas, imagino verlas formarse. Veo el sedimento. Veo las capas que se forman. Veo las capas que se unen por la presión y se endurecen. En mi mente, esto tarda solo unos minutos. Sin embargo, en la naturaleza, el proceso tarda mucho tiempo.

Preguntas:

1. ¿Qué es el sedimento?
2. ¿Qué se necesita para que los sedimentos formen una roca?
3. ¿Cómo se comparan la piedra caliza y la arenisca?



Crédito: Parmna/Shutterstock.com

Collecting Rocks for a Rock Museum

Equipment

- Bag, container, or egg carton to carry rocks
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Trowel, shovel, or other tool to remove rocks from ground
- Rock field guide (optional)

Vocabulary

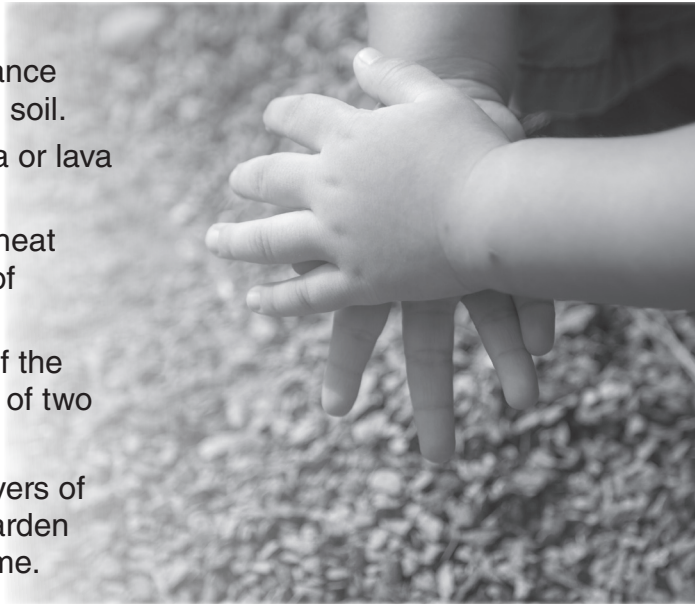
Earth Material: A nonliving, natural substance such as water, minerals and rocks, sand, and soil.

igneous rock: A rock formed when magma or lava (melted rock), cools and becomes solid.

metamorphic rock: A rock formed when heat and pressure act on a rock for a long period of time.

rock: Natural material that makes up most of the solid part of Earth. Most rocks are composed of two or more minerals.

sedimentary rock: A rock formed from layers of sediment or particles of rocks and soil that harden after they are pressed together over a long time.



Credit: pratan ounpitipong/Shutterstock.com

Activity

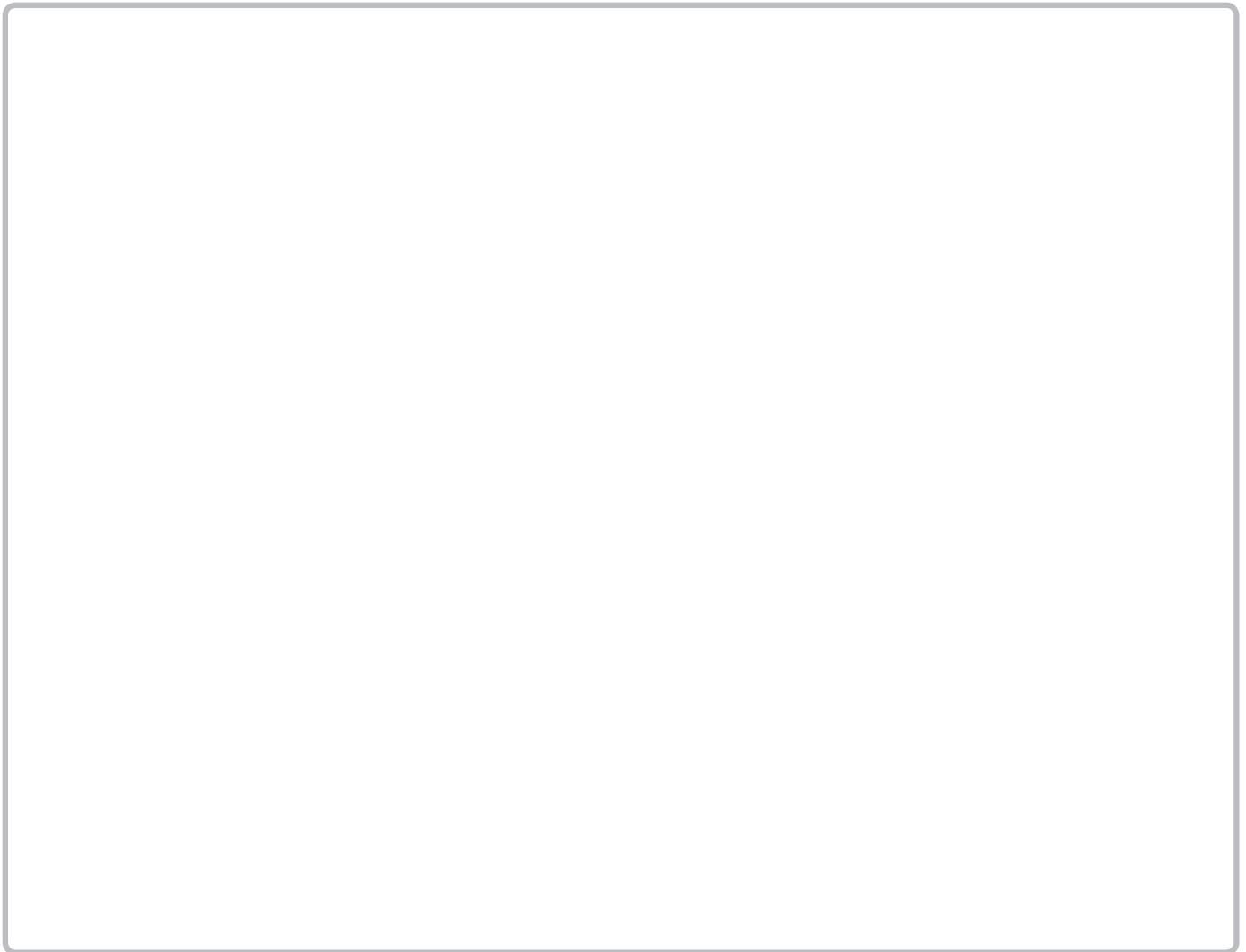
1. Head outdoors with your student to collect a variety of small rocks. Your student will bring one rock to class for a class Rock Museum by the date on the second page of this activity sheet.
2. Encourage conversation about the properties (size, shape, color, and texture) of the rocks you find together. Try to collect between 10 and 12 rocks that display a variety of attributes.
3. Bring the rock collection home. You may have to wash and dry them to be able to examine them in detail.
4. Discuss the properties of the rocks you collected. Have your student come up with a way to sort the rocks you collected.
5. If you have access to a rock field guide, use it to learn more about your rocks.
6. Have your student choose one rock to bring to class. Help your student complete the next page of this sheet. Your student should bring the completed activity sheet to class with their rock by the date indicated.

Take-Home Science

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rocks Are Needed in the Rock Museum by: _____.

1. Draw and color your rock in the space below.



2. List the properties of your rock. _____

Take-Home Science

3. Where did you find the rock?

4. Do you think where you found the rock might give clues to the type of rock it is? Explain. _____

5. I think my rock is _____

Ciencia para llevar a casa

Querida familia:

Nuestra clase está comenzando una unidad de ciencia inquisitiva. La ciencia inquisitiva se trata de preguntas, exploraciones activas, dibujos, redacciones y grabaciones de lo que ven y hacen para crear un mayor entendimiento de la ciencia. Los niños pequeños son científicos naturales. Los científicos cuestionan todo. Cuando los científicos responden una pregunta, pasan sin titubear a la siguiente.

Ciencia para llevar a casa es una parte emocionante de nuestro programa porque es una forma en que podemos conectar mejor la escuela y nuestro hogar. Si todos trabajan juntos, podemos reforzar los conceptos científicos que el alumno explora en el aula. Así funciona la ciencia para llevar a casa.

El alumno llevará a casa una hoja de investigación que explica una actividad relacionada con la unidad de ciencia que la clase está estudiando. La actividad está diseñada para que todos los miembros de la familia (hijos más pequeños y más grandes por igual) puedan trabajar juntos para aprender sobre ciencia.

Una sección de la hoja de investigación explica la terminología científica y las ideas que se explorarán durante la actividad. Esta terminología científica y las ideas no son nuevas para el alumno, ya que la actividad sigue una clase en la que se exploraron esos mismos conceptos.

Las actividades son simples y se pueden completar en 20 minutos con artículos que se hallan normalmente en una casa. Una sección de la hoja de investigación está dedicada para que el estudiante la complete y la lleve a la escuela. En clase, los alumnos tendrán la oportunidad de compartir sus experiencias y resultados con los compañeros.

Las actividades deben ser rápidas, informales y divertidas. ¡A disfrutar!



¡SALGAN A EXPLORAR!

Recolección de rocas para un Museo de Rocas

Equipo

- Bolsa, recipiente o huevera de cartón para cargar las rocas
- Crayones o lápices de colores
- Guía de rocas (opcional)
- Llama, pala u otra herramienta para extraer las rocas del suelo

Vocabulario

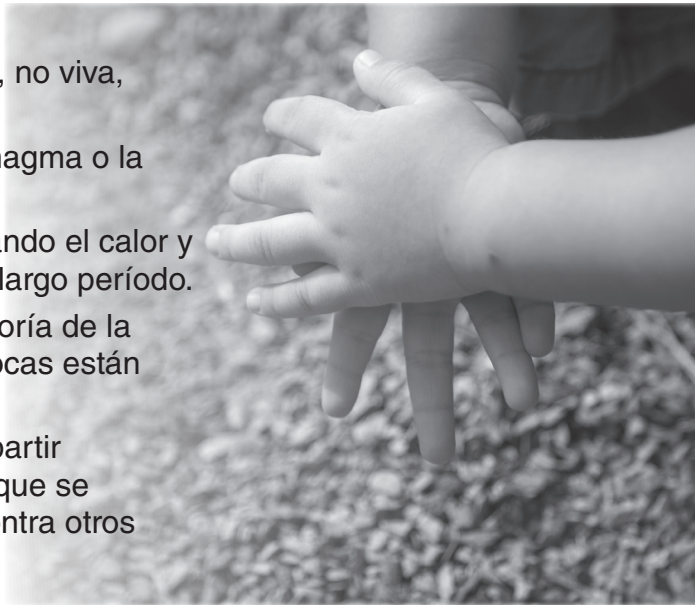
material terrestre: una sustancia natural, no viva, como agua, minerales, rocas, arena y tierra.

roca ígnea: una roca formada cuando la magma o la lava (roca fundida) se enfría y solidifica.

roca metamórfica: una roca formada cuando el calor y la presión actúan sobre una roca durante un largo período.

roca: material natural que constituye la mayoría de la parte sólida de la Tierra. La mayoría de las rocas están compuestas de dos o más minerales.

roca sedimentaria: una roca formada a partir de sedimentos o partículas de rocas y tierra que se endurecen después ser presionados unos contra otros durante un largo tiempo.



Crédito: pratan ounpitipong/Shutterstock.com

Actividad

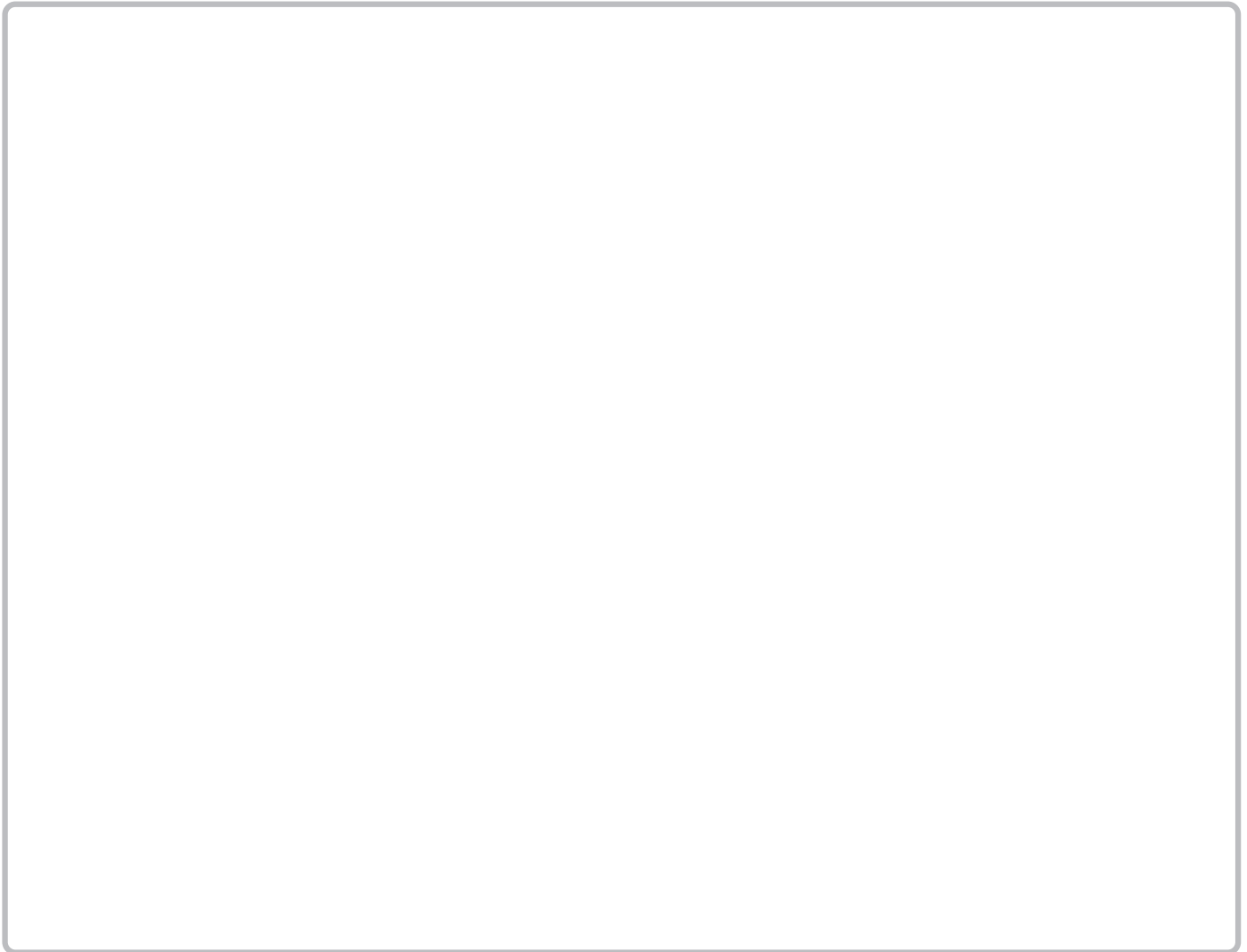
1. Salga al aire libre con su alumno para recolectar diversas rocas pequeñas. Su alumno llevará una roca para el Museo de Rocas de la clase en la fecha indicada en la segunda página de esta hoja de actividad.
2. Aliente una conversación sobre las propiedades (tamaño, forma, color y textura) de las rocas que encuentren juntas. Intenten recolectar de 10 a 12 rocas que exhiban una variedad de atributos.
3. Lleven la colección de rocas a casa. Tal vez tengan que lavarlas y secarlas para que puedan examinarlas con detalle.
4. Hablen sobre las propiedades de las rocas que recolectaron. Pídale a su alumno que idee una forma de clasificar las rocas recolectadas.
5. Si tiene acceso a una guía de rocas, utilícela para aprender más sobre sus rocas.
6. Pídale a su alumno que seleccione una roca para llevarla a clase. Ayude a su alumno a completar la siguiente página de esta hoja. Su alumno deberá llevar a la clase su roca y la hoja de actividad completa en la fecha indicada.

Ciencia para llevar a casa

Nombre: _____ Fecha: _____

Las rocas deberán estar en el Museo de Rocas para el: _____.

1. Dibuja y colorea tu roca en el siguiente espacio.



2. Anota las propiedades de tu roca. _____

Ciencia para llevar a casa

3. ¿Dónde encontraste la roca?

4. ¿Crees que el lugar donde hallaste la roca pueda darte pistas de qué tipo de roca es? Explica. _____

5. Creo que mi roca es _____

Literacy and Science 3A: Breaking Down Earth's Materials

Name: _____ Date: _____

A. Read

Breaking Down Earth's Materials

Materials like rocks and sand are always changing. Large rocks are broken down by erosion and weathering. These processes turn larger rocks into much smaller rocks and gravel. Weathering is the process of breaking rocks down into smaller pieces. Erosion is the movement of sand, soil, or rock from place to place. Erosion is caused by water, ice, or wind. Sand is made up of very tiny pieces of weathered rocks. The changes caused by weathering and erosion can happen over a long period of time.



Credit: Eugene Gordin/Shutterstock.com

B. Write

Complete the sentences below. Use the text from Part A and the word bank below to help you.

Word Bank

wind

long

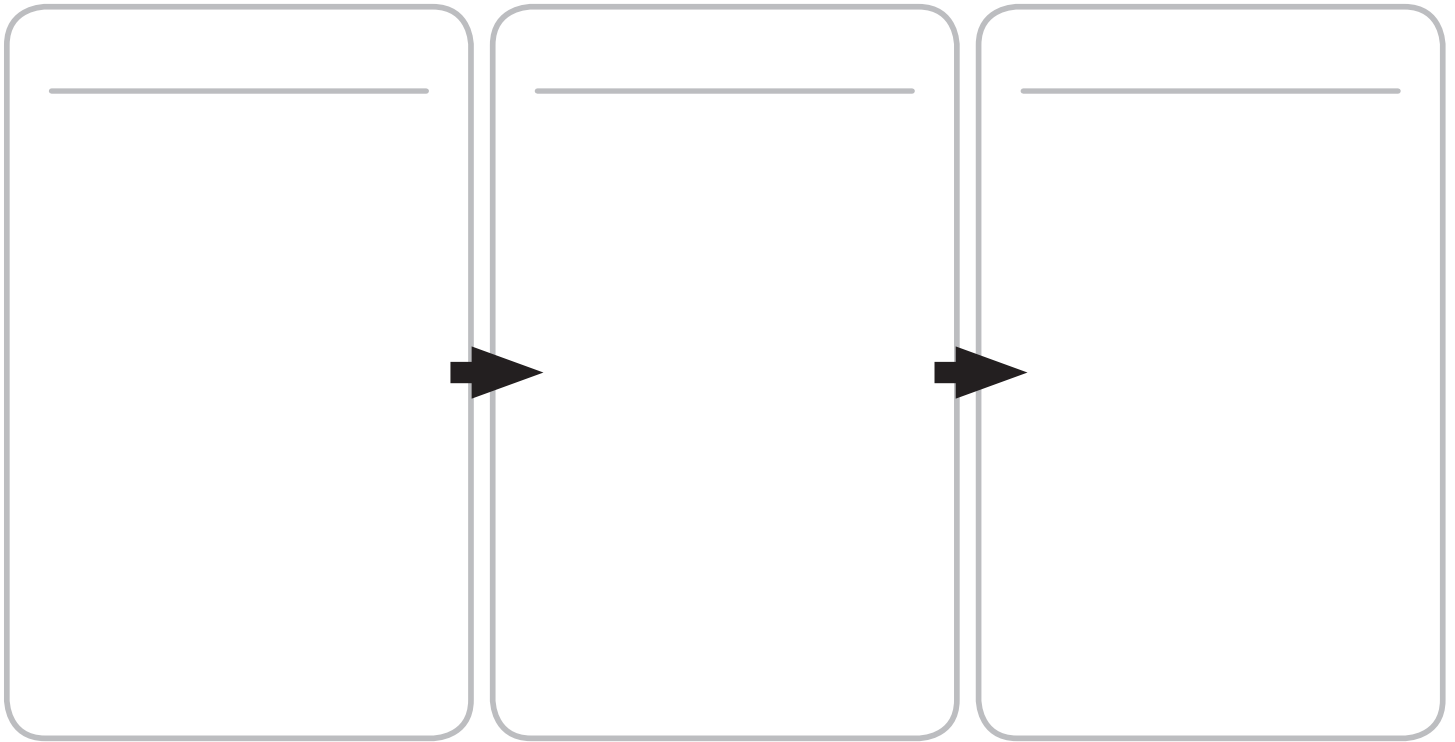
weathering

broken

1. Materials such as rocks can be _____ down.
2. Erosion is the movement of sand and rocks caused by water, ice, or _____.
3. _____ is breaking down rocks into smaller pieces.
4. Rocks break down into sand over a _____ period of time.

C. Draw

1. Complete the flow chart by listing your materials in order from largest to smallest to show how rocks break down. Then draw a picture of each.



2. Write a sentence to explain how rocks break down over time into sand. Use evidence from the article in Part A to help.

Rocks break down into _____ and sand over a long period of time by _____

Conocimientos básicos y ciencia 3A: Desintegración de los materiales terrestres

Nombre: _____ Fecha: _____

A. Lee

Desintegración de los materiales terrestres

Los materiales, como las rocas y la arena, están cambiando constantemente. Las rocas grandes se fragmentan por la erosión y la meteorización. Estos procesos transforman las rocas grandes en rocas más pequeñas y grava. La meteorización es el proceso de fragmentación de las rocas en pedazos más pequeños. La erosión es el movimiento de arena, tierra o rocas de un lugar a otro. La erosión es causada por el agua, el hielo o el viento. La arena está formada por pedazos diminutos de rocas meteorizadas. Los cambios causados por la meteorización y la erosión pueden ocurrir durante un período muy largo.



Crédito: Eugene Gordin/Shutterstock.com

B. Escribe

Completa las siguientes frases. Usa el texto de la Parte A y el siguiente banco de palabras como ayuda.

Banco de palabras

viento

largo

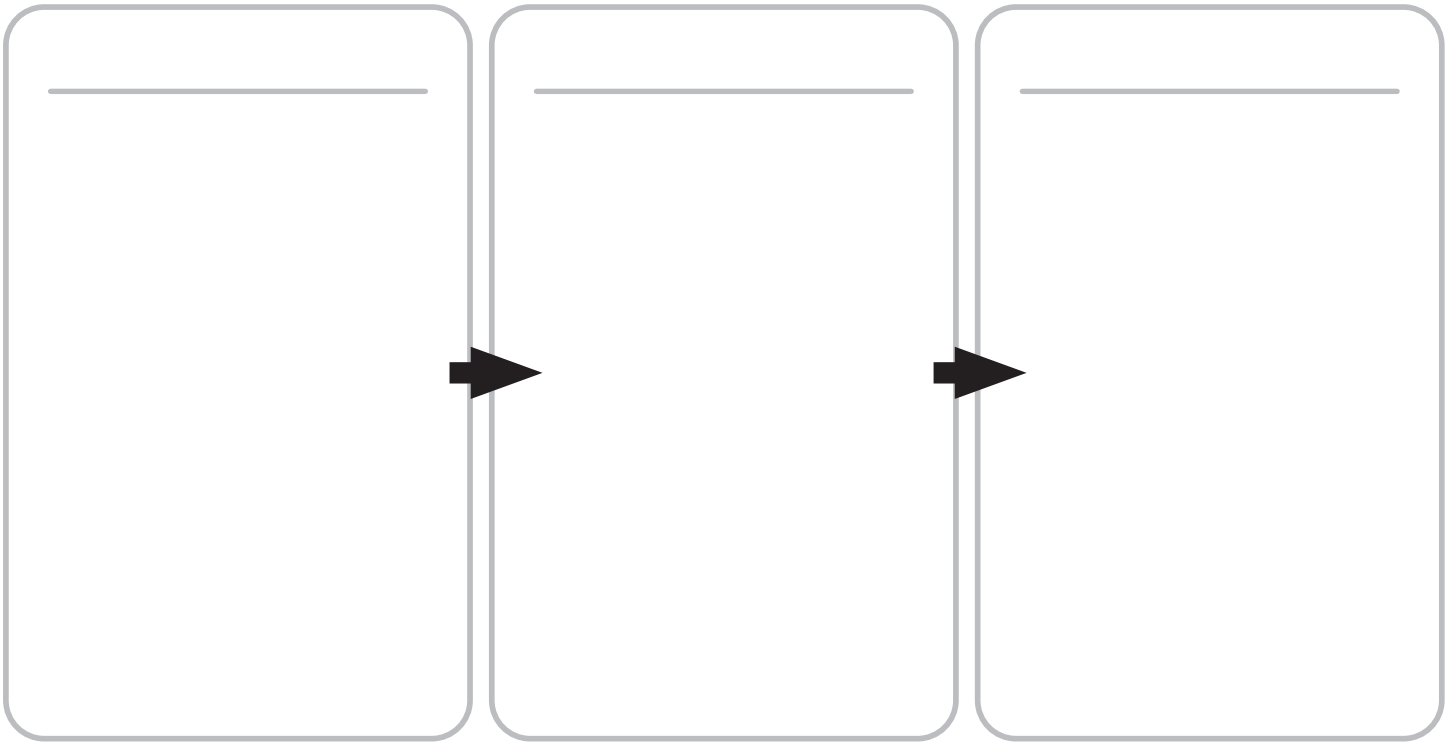
meteorización

desintegrarse

1. Los materiales, como las rocas, pueden_____.
2. La erosión es el movimiento de arena y rocas causado por el agua, el hielo o el_____.
3. La_____ es la fragmentación de rocas en trozos más pequeños.
4. Las rocas se fragmentan hasta convertirse en arena durante un_____período.

C. Dibuja

1. Completa el diagrama de flujo anotando los materiales en orden, del más grande al más pequeño, para mostrar cómo las rocas se desintegran. Después, haz un dibujo de cada uno.



2. Escribe una frase para explicar cómo se desintegran las rocas con el tiempo para convertirse en arena. Usa evidencia del artículo de la Parte A como ayuda.

Las rocas se fragmentan hasta convertirse en _____ y arena durante un largo período por _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Castles Made of Sand

Sand can be used for many things. It can be used by builders, glass makers, and artists. It takes a long time for sand to be made. Sand can be worn down by ocean waves. Waves move the sand on the beach.

There are beaches in many different colors, including tan, white, and green. There are black beaches and pink beaches, too. The color of the sand on a beach can come from the rocks, minerals, and even shells that are found there.

Have you ever made a sandcastle? It takes the right mix of sand and water to build a castle that can stand up on its own. Until, of course, a wave comes and knocks it over!

Some people enter contests to build castles and other things made out of sand. These contests are held all over the world. These contests can have themes like “The Jungle,” “Ocean Animals,” or “Dinosaurs.” Contestants mix together large amounts of sand and water. They

can make structures that are many meters tall!

Maybe one day you’ll enter a sandcastle contest. What would your sandcastle look like? There are so many types of sandcastles to build!

Questions:

1. What do waves do to the sand?
2. What can the colors of sand be on Earth’s beaches?
3. How do you build a sandcastle?



Credit: Vincent St. Thomas/Shutterstock.com

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Castillos de arena

La arena puede usarse para muchas cosas. Puede ser usada por constructores, productores de vidrio y artistas. La arena tarda mucho tiempo en crearse. La arena puede ser desintegrada por las olas del mar. Las olas mueven la arena a la playa.

Hay playas de diversos colores, entre ellos, marrón claro, blanco y verde. También hay playas negras y rosadas. El color de la arena en una playa puede deberse a las rocas, los minerales e incluso las conchas que están presentes allí.

¿Alguna vez has hecho un castillo de arena? Se requiere la mezcla apropiada de arena y agua para construir un castillo que pueda sostenerse. Por supuesto, hasta que llegue una ola y lo derribe.

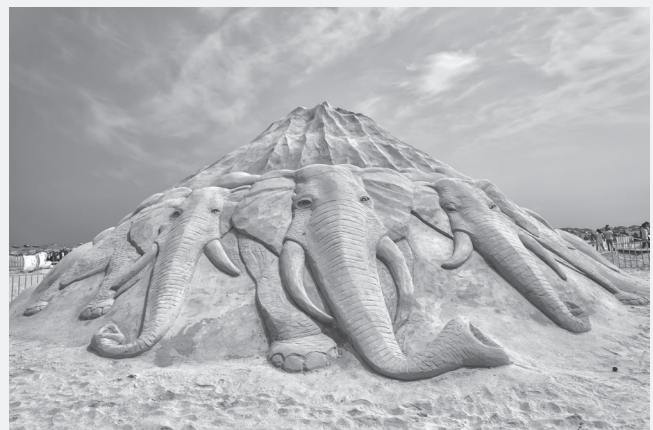
Algunas personas participan en concursos para construir castillos y otros objetos hechos de arena. Estos concursos se celebran en todo el mundo. Estos concursos pueden tener temas, como “La selva”,

“Animales marinos” o “Dinosaurios.” Los concursantes mezclan grandes cantidades de arena y agua. Pueden crear estructuras de muchos metros de altura.

Tal vez algún día participes en un concurso de castillos de arena. ¿Qué aspecto tendría tu castillo de arena? Hay muchos tipos de castillos de arena que pueden construirse.

Preguntas:

1. ¿Qué le hacen las olas a la arena?
2. ¿De qué colores puede ser la arena en las playas de la Tierra?
3. ¿Cómo se construye un castillo de arena?



Crédito: Vincent St. Thomas/Shutterstock.com

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Dirt on Soil

Soil is made of many layers. One part of soil is humus. It is made of dead plants and animals. It is also home to many kinds of living things. Earthworms, bacteria, and molds live in humus. Underneath humus is topsoil. Most plants grow in topsoil.

Sometimes gardeners add a layer of cow manure to the soil in their garden at the start of a growing season. Manure is animal waste. It has materials in it that plants need to grow. These materials are called nutrients. Plants need help to get nutrients from the soil. Tiny living things called bacteria help the plants. They break down waste and turn it into nutrients that plants can use. Plants change the nutrients in soil into new materials. Some of these materials are sugar. Some of them are fiber. Some of them are starch. These are things you eat.

We need bacteria and the other things that live in soil. Without them, the soil would run out of nutrients. Plants would not grow. There would be no food to eat.

Questions:

1. What lives in humus?
2. In which layer of soil do plants grow?
3. Why are bacteria in soil important?



Credit: kazoka/Shutterstock.com

Nombre: _____ Fecha: _____

La verdad sobre el suelo

El suelo está formado por muchas capas. Una parte del suelo es el humus. Está formado por plantas y animales muertos. También es el hogar de muchos tipos de organismos vivientes. En el humus viven lombrices de tierra, bacterias y mohos. Debajo del humus está el mantillo. La mayoría de las plantas crecen en el mantillo.

Algunas veces, los jardineros añaden una capa de estiércol de vaca al suelo del jardín cuando comienza la temporada de cultivo. El estiércol es excremento animal. Contiene materiales que las plantas necesitan para crecer. Estos materiales se conocen como nutrientes. Las plantas necesitan ayuda para extraer los nutrientes del suelo. Diminutos organismos vivos, llamados bacterias, ayudan a las plantas. Descomponen los desechos y los transforman en nutrientes que pueden utilizar las plantas. Las plantas transforman los nutrientes del suelo en nuevos materiales. Algunos de estos materiales son azúcar. Algunos de ellos son fibra. Algunos son almidón. Estas son cosas que comes.

Necesitamos bacterias y otras cosas que viven en el suelo. Sin ellos, el suelo se quedaría sin nutrientes. Las plantas no crecerían. No habría alimentos para comer.

Preguntas:

1. ¿Qué vive en el humus?
2. ¿En qué capa del suelo crecen las plantas?
3. ¿Por qué son importantes las bacterias en el suelo?



Crédito: kazoka/Shutterstock.com

Literacy and Science 4C: Reducing Soil Erosion

Name: _____ Date: _____

A. Read

Read about how farmers are finding solutions to soil erosion. Then fill in the T-chart on the next page.

Contour Planting

The best way to control erosion is to make sure the soil is covered by vegetation. But when farmers grow crops, they clear the land and plant the crops in rows. Still, farmers have found a way to slow water erosion in their fields. Contour planting is when the crops are planted in rows that follow the shape of the land rather than rows that are straight up and down. Contour planting protects the crops from being washed away by water.



Terrace Farming

Water erosion can destroy topsoil so plants cannot grow. One solution farmers have to solve the problem of water erosion is to plant crops on a terrace. Terrace farming has been used by farmers around the world for centuries. Terraces, or steps, are built into the side of a large hill, and crops are planted on each level of the terrace. This slows the flow of water and prevents the water from rushing quickly down the hill and washing away the soil.



Wind Breaks

Wind erosion can cause freshly plowed soil to blow away. Farmers have found solutions to lessen the effects of soil erosion caused by wind. One solution is to grow trees along the edges of freshly plowed fields. The row of trees acts as a barrier, protecting the land from fast-blowing winds and slowing the effects of wind on the soil.



B. Compare

Problem	Solution

Conocimientos básicos y ciencia 4C: Reducción de la erosión del suelo

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

A. Lee

Lee sobre cómo los agricultores están encontrando soluciones para la erosión del suelo. Después, llena la tabla en T de la siguiente página.

Siembra en curvas a nivel

La mejor manera de controlar la erosión es cerciorarse de que el suelo esté cubierto por vegetación. Sin embargo, cuando los agricultores cultivan, limpian el terreno y siembran en filas. Incluso en estos casos, los agricultores han encontrado una manera de reducir la erosión por agua en sus campos. En la siembra en curvas a nivel, o siembra al contorno, los cultivos se siembran en filas que siguen el contorno del terreno y no en filas rectas. La siembra en curvas a nivel protege los cultivos de ser arrastrados por el agua.



Cultivos en terrazas

La erosión por el agua puede destruir el mantillo e impedir que las plantas crezcan. Una solución que tienen los agricultores para resolver el problema de la erosión por el agua es sembrar los cultivos en una terraza. Los cultivos en terrazas han sido utilizados durante siglos por agricultores en todo el mundo. Se construyen terrazas, o escalones, en la ladera de una colina grande, y se siembran los cultivos en cada nivel de la terraza. Esto frena el flujo de agua e impide que el agua descienda con rapidez por la colina, deslavando el suelo.



Rompevientos

La erosión por el viento puede llevarse el suelo recién arado. Los agricultores han encontrado soluciones para aminorar los efectos de la erosión del suelo causada por el viento. Una solución es sembrar árboles a lo largo de los bordes de los campos recién arados. La fila de árboles sirve como barrera que protege la tierra de los vientos fuertes y reduce el efecto del viento en el suelo.



B. Compara

Problema	Solución

Name: _____

Date: _____

Hiking the Canyon

A geologist came to our class and took us on a virtual field trip to the Grand Canyon. She brought samples of rocks that are found here. She also showed us pictures and videos from all around the canyon. We even went on a virtual hike!

I've read about how rivers erode the land. It is a different thing to see it up close, though. This is no ordinary riverbed. The canyon is huge! It is 446 kilometers (277 miles) long. At its deepest, the canyon is over 1829 meters (6,000 feet) deep. In fact, the Grand Canyon is so deep that it can be seen from space!

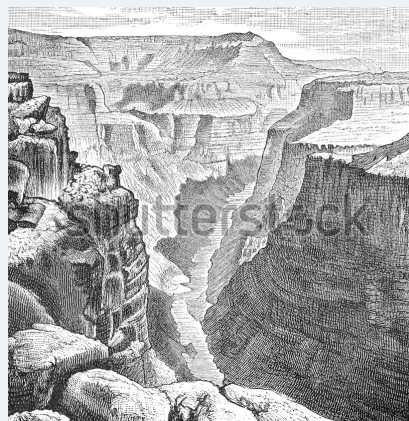
The Grand Canyon was carved by water flowing in the Colorado River. The canyon didn't form overnight. It formed slowly, over millions of years. During that time, water in the river eroded the rocks. Floods in the dry canyon area carried a lot of sediment. The sediment scoured away more soil from the riverbed. In winter, water in cracks in the rock froze. The ice broke the rocks apart.

The river carried the broken rocks away. The canyon got deeper and wider.

The river still runs through the bottom of the Grand Canyon. It is still carrying away sediment. The Grand Canyon is still changing.

Questions:

1. What formed the Grand Canyon?
2. You have learned a lot about rocks and how they change. Based on what you know, how do you think the layers of the Grand Canyon formed?
3. Imagine that you could visit the Grand Canyon a million years from now. How might the canyon look then?



Credit: Hein Nouwens/Shutterstock.com

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Una excursión a pie por el cañón

Una geóloga vino a la clase y nos guió por una visita virtual al Gran Cañón. Trajo muestras de rocas que se encuentran allí. También nos mostró fotografías y videos de todas partes del cañón. ¡Incluso hicimos una excursión a pie virtual!

He leído sobre cómo los ríos erosionan la tierra. Sin embargo, es muy distinto verlo de cerca. Este no es un cauce de río ordinario. ¡El cañón es enorme! Mide 446 kilómetros (277 millas) de largo. En su punto más profundo, el cañón tiene más de 1829 metros (6000 pies) de profundidad. De hecho, el Gran Cañón es tan profundo que puede verse desde el espacio.

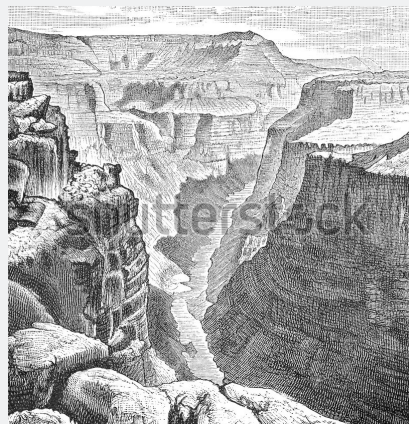
El Gran Cañón fue formado por el flujo del agua del río Colorado. El cañón no se formó de la noche a la mañana. Se formó lentamente, a lo largo de millones de años. Durante ese tiempo, el agua del río erosionó las rocas. Las inundaciones en la zona seca del cañón arrastraron muchos sedimentos. Los sedimentos desprendieron más suelo del cauce

del río. En invierno, el agua en las grietas de las rocas se congeló. El hielo partió las rocas. El río se llevó las rocas rotas. El cañón se hizo más profundo y ancho.

El río aún fluye por el fondo del Gran Cañón. Aún arrastra sedimentos. El Gran Cañón sigue cambiando.

Preguntas:

1. ¿Qué formó el Gran Cañón?
2. Has aprendido mucho acerca de las rocas y cómo cambian. Basándote en lo que sabes, ¿cómo crees que se formaron las capas del Gran Cañón?
3. Imagina que pudieras visitar el Gran Cañón dentro de un millón de años. ¿Qué aspecto podría tener el cañón entonces?



Crédito: Hein Nouwens/Shutterstock.com

Teacher Sheet: Science in the News Article Report

To help students understand a concept, it is often helpful to associate it with an event or phenomenon. Depending on the topic, students may be able to draw connections to recent events in the news or to historical events in your area. Using a literacy tool like an article report is a helpful way to bring in literacy, reading comprehension, and science topics at any grade level.

Science in the News articles can be assigned at any point during a unit to assist students in seeing the “real-world connection” to a particular concept. These articles should be provided by the teacher in lower grades, but students in grades 3–5 may be ready for the challenge of selecting their own articles independently. The following guidelines will help you find appropriate articles. If you ask students to locate their own articles, you may wish to provide some of these guidelines along with the specific requirements for the assignment. Students at all grades are provided with an article report sheet to help them analyze their article and draw connections between it and the unit concepts. For students in grades 3–5, a rubric is provided in this appendix to help them to evaluate an article for bias and credibility.

1. Choose a topic that aligns with content

- Look for an article that will be engaging to students. It might be helpful to use local news sources or current events. Try to find a topic that students will be able to relate to and find interesting. For example, students will find greater interest in relating chemical reactions to cooking than in a laboratory setting.

2. Seek appropriate articles

- Typical news sites contain text that is likely too complex for elementary students. Use a search engine to find websites that provide kid-friendly news. Many of these websites align their content by grade level and cover a variety of topics.
- Though news is more frequently updated on websites, it is also possible to use text sources, such as kid-friendly newspapers or magazines.

3. Determine the credibility of the source

- It is very important to choose an article from a credible source to avoid bias and false news. Use the credibility rubric to assess sources before selecting articles.

4. Read the article

- Once you have chosen an article of interest, read it to determine its connection to the unit content. Take note of any new or unfamiliar terms so they can be reviewed later.

Differentiation Strategy

If you are selecting the article, consider editing the text to differentiate instruction.

5. Ask students to read the article and complete an article report sheet. Remind them to:

- Provide information about where the article was found.
- Answer questions about the current event and draw connections to what they have learned during the unit.

Science in the News: Article Report

Name: _____ Date: _____

Draw a picture of what happened in the article.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Words I know: _____

Words I did not know: _____

I learned that _____

My Time Machine

I wish I could build a time machine. I want to go to the future and see how my town has changed. I want to go to the past and see what Earth looked like a really long time ago.

I told my teacher about my idea. He liked it, but he said I don't need a time machine to visit the past. He told me to study rocks. Rocks hold clues about what Earth was like long ago.

A sedimentary rock is like a history lesson. Long ago, sediment piled up in layers. Sediment is tiny bits of rocks and minerals. It can also contain parts of once-living things. As more and more layers piled up, the bottom layers were pressed together. The pressed-together sediment hardened. It formed sedimentary rock.

Limestone and sandstone are sedimentary rocks. Most limestone formed from the remains of ocean animals and plants that pile up on the ocean floor. How do you think

sandstone formed? You guessed it! It formed from sandy sediment.

When I look at rocks, I imagine watching them form. I see sediment. I see layers form. I see the layers pressing together and hardening. In my mind, this takes only minutes. But in nature, the process takes a very long time.

Questions:

1. What is sediment? (*Sediment is tiny particles of rock, minerals, or remains of once-living things.*)
2. What is needed for sediment to form rock? (*Sediment can turn into rock over time if it is pressed together.*)
3. How do limestone and sandstone compare? (*Both limestone and sandstone are sedimentary rocks. Limestone forms from pressed-together remains of once living things. Sandstone forms from pressed-together sand.*)

Castles Made of Sand

Sand can be used for many things. It can be used by builders, glass makers, and artists. It takes a long time for sand to be made. Sand can be worn down by ocean waves. Waves move the sand on the beach.

There are beaches in many different colors, including tan, white, and green. There are black beaches and pink beaches, too. The color of the sand on a beach can come from the rocks, minerals, and even shells that are found there.

Have you ever made a sandcastle? It takes the right mix of sand and water to build a castle that can stand up on its own. Until, of course, a wave comes and knocks it over!

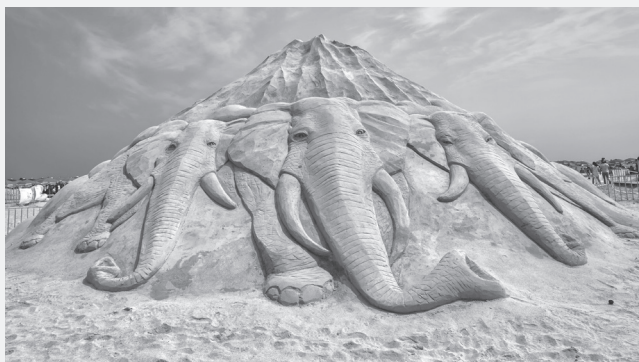
Some people enter contests to build castles and other things made out of sand. These contests are held all over the world. These contests can have themes like "The Jungle," "Ocean Animals," or "Dinosaurs." Contestants mix together large amounts of sand and water. They

can make structures that are many meters tall!

Maybe one day you'll enter a sandcastle contest. What would your sandcastle look like? There are so many types of sandcastles to build!

Questions:

1. What do waves do to the sand?
(Wear it down, move it on the beach)
2. What can the colors of sand be on Earth's beaches?
(Tan, white, green, black, pink)
3. How do you build a sandcastle?
(With the right mix of sand and water.)



Credit: Vincent St. Thomas/Shutterstock.com

The Dirt on Soil

Soil is made of many layers. One part of soil is humus. It is made of dead plants and animals. It is also home to many kinds of living things. Earthworms, bacteria, and molds live in humus. Underneath humus is topsoil. Most plants grow in topsoil.

Sometimes gardeners add a layer of cow manure to the soil in their garden at the start of a growing season. Manure is animal waste. It has materials in it that plants need to grow. These materials are called nutrients. Plants need help to get nutrients from the soil. Tiny living things called bacteria help the plants. They break down waste and turn it into nutrients that plants can use. Plants change the nutrients in soil into new materials. Some of these materials are sugar. Some of them are fiber. Some of them are starch. These are things you eat.

We need bacteria and the other things that live in soil. Without them, the soil would run out of nutrients. Plants would not grow. There would be no food to eat.

Questions:

1. What lives in humus?
(Earthworms, bacteria, and molds live in humus.)
2. In which layer of soil do plants grow?
(Plants grow in topsoil.)
3. Why are bacteria in soil important?
(Bacteria break down wastes. This adds nutrients to soil. Without nutrients, plants cannot grow.)



Credit: kazoka/Shutterstock.com

Hiking the Canyon

A geologist came to our class and took us on a virtual field trip to the Grand Canyon. She brought samples of rocks that are found here. She also showed us pictures and videos from all around the canyon. We even went on a virtual hike!

I've read about how rivers erode the land. It is a different thing to see it up close, though. This is no ordinary riverbed. The canyon is huge! It is 446 kilometers (277 miles) long. At its deepest, the canyon is over 1829 meters (6,000 feet) deep. In fact, the Grand Canyon is so deep that it can be seen from space!

The Grand Canyon was carved by water flowing in the Colorado River. The canyon didn't form overnight. It formed slowly, over millions of years. During that time, water in the river eroded the rocks. Floods in the dry canyon area carried a lot of sediment. The sediment scoured away more soil from the riverbed. In winter, water in cracks in the rock froze. The ice broke the rocks apart. The river carried the broken rocks away. The canyon got deeper and wider.

The river still runs through the bottom of the Grand Canyon. It is still carrying away sediment. The Grand Canyon is still changing.

Questions:

1. What formed the Grand Canyon? *(The Grand Canyon was formed by water flowing in the Colorado River.)*
2. You have learned a lot about rocks and how they change. Based on what you know, how do you think the layers of the Grand Canyon formed? *(Students should understand that the layers formed as materials hardened. Some of the layers are igneous rock that formed when lava flowed from a volcano and hardened. Others are sedimentary rock that formed as sediments were deposited in layers and over time were pressed together and hardened.)*
3. Imagine that you could visit the Grand Canyon a million years from now. How might the canyon look then? *(Students might suggest that the Grand Canyon would be even deeper and longer in a million years.)*