



Adopt a Rock

Location of activity provided by staff

Summary

Intro reading: 5-10 mins

Explain activity/ collect rocks: 5 mins

Activity 10-15 mins

Grades: (suggested) K-3

Subject: Rock Exploration

Activity Objective:

To have students choose a rock (that they get to keep) and study the texture, shape and color to be able to distinguish it from other rocks.

Materials & Preparation:

- (provided) Book: *Everyone Needs a Rock*
- (provided) Blindfolds
- (provided) Empty box with a hole in the cover
- (**not** provided) A box or bag to carry all the rocks back to school
- Prep: Look over materials (if time before the first group) read the book



Key Vocabulary Terms: texture, patterns, shapes, size

NOTE: Back at school- additional activities may be done with rocks (last pages attached to this lesson gives examples)

Intro Reading: (5-10 mins)

Have the students sit comfortably in a semi-circle in front of you.

Read the book, *Everybody Needs a Rock*. You may wish to ask the children to review some of Byrd Baylor's rules for finding a rock.

Explain Activity/ Collect rocks: (5 mins)

Tell the students to think of the rules for finding a rock, because they are going to have about 5 minutes to explore the rocks in the area (set some boundaries) and to find their own favorite rock. They are going to be allowed to keep this rock and take it back to school, so they should be very careful about finding the rock they like best.

Activity:(10-15 mins)

After everyone has found a rock, the students regroup in their semi-circle. Ask each student to describe their rock. **What can be said about the color? texture? shape? size? weight? What is special about the rock?**

1. Pass the box around (with the lid off) and ask the children to drop their rocks in the box. Mix them up. Then take out the rocks, one by one, and hold up the rock and see if the students can pick out their own rock.
2. Collect all rocks again. This time ask the students if they think they could pick out their own rock without looking at them. Pass out the blindfolds and ask the students to put them on so they cannot see anything.

Pass the rocks around the semi-circle again while the children are blindfolded. By feeling the rocks each child should be able to pick out their own special rock.

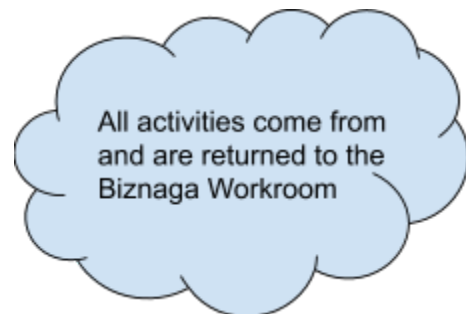
3. Collect the rocks in the box. Put the cover on the box. Ask the students if they think they could find their rocks among all the others in the box...by reaching in and feeling the rocks. They will be surprised to find that they can locate their rocks quite easily by now.

If there is time, the students might share with the group the reasons they think their rocks are best for them.

Ask the students to place their rocks in the container brought from school. Tell them they will have to remember their rocks so they can use them in other activities back at school.

Clean Up:

After the last group, place all materials in the activity box and bring it to the table in “Biznaga” Workroom. Give the container of children's rocks to the teacher to be taken back to school.



ADOPT A ROCK ACTIVITIES BACK AT SCHOOL:

Writing:

Write "My Rock" in the center of the chalkboard. Draw five arrows pointing out from the words. Ask the students to name the five senses. At the tip of each arrow write the name of a sense. Ask what their senses could tell about the rock.

Examples:

Touch...texture (smooth, rough, bumpy), edges (rounded, sharp), shape

Smell...dusty, clean

Sight...color, size, crystals, sheen, shape, patterns, how does it look wet?

Sound...what sounds do you hear when you clink your rock against something?

Taste...(This is optional. You may not want your students to taste the rock.)

As the students examine their individual rocks, they write a sentence (or paragraph) about what each of their senses tells them about their rock.

Another writing activity:

Write on the board: "If your rock could tell a story, what would that story be? Allow students time to write about what their rock's story would be.

Art:

Students draw a picture of their rocks.

Students paint their rocks and put them on display in the classroom or at home.

SPIN OFF: Talk to children about wishes. Ask them if they are familiar with any stories about wishing, such as the story of Aladdin and his lamp. Invite them to use the rocks they decorated to make "wishing rocks." Encourage children to hold up their rocks and make a wish. Then invite children to share their wishes with their classmates. What sort of things do they wish for?

Same thing can be done with a story- instead call them story stones

Math:

Students weigh their rocks. Older grades (You may discuss mass, density, displacement, volume, circumference, specific gravity, and even trajectory)

Sorting activity:

Divide students into groups of 3-4 and have them put their rocks together in the center of the group. Have them sort the rocks based on their own invented criteria (or you can

have the group choose how to sort the collection). Depending on the age of your students, encourage more or less sophisticated criteria, but let them come up with the categories. For example, younger students might sort based on color or size; older students might be required to come up with criteria like relative hardness (using the Moh's scale) or the type of rock it is (igneous, sedimentary, or metamorphic).

**You will need a variety of rocks for this activity. In addition to your own collection, I suggest you invite each student to contribute 2-3 rocks. Make sure you mark them so students can retrieve their treasures at the end of the unit.*

History:

What do rocks have to do with history? Plenty, as it turns out, thanks to our tendency to use rocks to mark a moment in time, a sacred space, or even a spot on a map. Think Plymouth Rock and Mt. Rushmore, Uluru and the Black Stone of the Kaaba, Independence Rock and the Rock of Gibraltar.

Here's an idea to extend your rock study into social studies—with your students, come up with a list of famous rocks. Don't forget rocks that have been made into something, like Stonehenge and the Washington Monument. Have each student choose a famous rock(s) and make a poster, write an essay, or create a presentation to share with the class.

You can also discuss how the desire for certain kinds of rocks has shaped history. Salt, after all, is a rock, as are gold, silver, and diamonds. Salt has been used as currency. Gold and silver “rushes” shaped the people and boundaries of the American West. Current warfare in Africa has led to a ban in the trade of “conflict diamonds.” Clearly, the desire for certain kinds of rocks drives politics and societies even today.

Science:

A study of geology, classification, and the rock cycle may evolve from the rock activities.