

Rock Hounds at Heart

Summary

Integrate literature with science by reading Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. Students will learn to describe rocks by using different physical properties.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 2

[Reading: Literature Standard 3](#)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Pairs

Life Skills

Communication

Materials

- rocks
- magnifying glasses
- egg cartons
- paper
- pencils
- tempra paint
- permanent markers
- Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig

Background for Teachers

Rocks are made up of two or more minerals. Rocks are divided into three classes, according to the way they are formed. The three classes are igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic. Rocks can be identified and classified by texture, color, density, hardness, luster, magnetism, and cleavage.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Make observations. Develop and use catagories. Understand science concepts. Use the language of science as a means of communicating.

Instructional Procedures

Read the book Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. Discuss what was special about Sylvester's pebble. How did it change his life? How did it change the life of his family? Could the story be real? Discuss the various attributes of Sylvester's pebble (other than the fact that it was magic.)

Ask students to share things they know about rocks. What do they look like? What are their characteristics? Where do they come from? Etc. Ask students to bring at least ten different rocks to class. Students are usually very eager to bring collections to school however you will need to have a collection of different types of rocks on hand for those students who forget to bring their rocks on the appointed day. Have the students get with a partner. Give an egg carton and magnifying glass to

each pair. Have the students pool their rocks so each pair of students has about 20 rocks. Give them rocks if necessary.

Working with their partner, have the students observe, discuss and write about the different characteristics of their rocks. Instruct students to make a list of the different characteristics of their collected rocks. Using the egg cartons, have the pairs organize and classify their rocks into self selected categories (ie. large--small [size], dark--light [color], dull--shiny [luster], single--multi-colored, rough--smooth [texture]).

Have each pair discuss their findings with a neighboring pair. Have students make an illustration of one of their rocks that shows two different characteristics. Have them also write a description of one of their rocks. Encourage students to share their illustrations and written description with their partner. Instruct students to write questions about rocks. What are some other things they would like to know about rocks? What would they like to learn about the rocks they collected?

Extensions

Make rock people or animals by glueing rocks together and painting them with tempera paints. Add eyes, spots, stripes or other features with permanent markers.

Assessment Plan

Use the Rock Uses assessment rubric. Evaluate their written description for accuracy. Ask the students to describe and defend the method they used for sorting the rocks.

Bibliography

My Little Book of Rocks (Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1993) 201 Whole Language Units for Science (Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1993) Steig, William Sylvester and the Magic Pebble (, 1989)

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)

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