

YOUR FIRST ROCK COLLECTION

Illustrated by Laurel Aiello

Would you believe there is a rock that floats? It is called pumice. Pumice forms from lava. There is a mineral that is so hard it is used as a cutting tool and is used in jewelry. It is the hardest mineral. It is called diamond. Talc, the softest mineral, can be scratched with your fingernail. Talc is used to make baby powder.

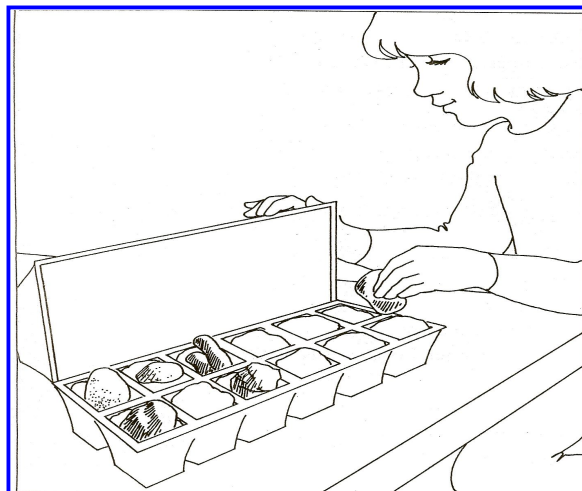
In this activity, you will collect rocks and list their properties. Listing properties means you will observe the rocks using your senses.

You Will Need

egg carton
tissue or cotton balls
magnifier, if you have one
index cards

What to Do

1. Get an empty egg carton. Place cotton or tissue paper in each section.
2. Go on a rock hunt. Try to gather rocks that look different. You can collect rocks around the school or at home. Use a pen and number the rocks from 1-12. If you collect rocks in different locations, record the locations. Find 12 rocks small enough to fit in the egg carton.
3. Wash and dry the rocks. Then place them in the egg carton.



Observing Your Rocks

Record your rock observations on one or two index cards. Tape the cards to the inside lid of the egg carton. Where did you find the rock? What is the rock's color? How does the rock feel? Is it smooth, rough, sandy, flaky, crumbly, glassy, or sharp? You can use the internet or the library and try to identify your rocks.

On the Internet

1. This site contains photos of rocks as well as information about rocks and minerals:

www.fi.edu/fellows/fellow1/oct98/expert/index.html

2. Here is an interactive site about rocks that sink and float:

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/scienceclips/ages/7_8/science_7_8.shtml