Amy Stone
Physical Geology
Grade: 3
Characteristics of Rocks Activity

Objective/Purpose: This is a good exercise to introduce students to the characteristics of the three primary groups of rocks. It forces them to use various learning methods to absorb and convey information.

Materials/Time Required:

1. 3 sheets of poster board
2. Information sheets listing basic info about each rock type (metamorphic, sedimentary, igneous)
3. Pictures (from books or internet) or samples of rocks from each type
4. 3 sets of markers, colored pencils, scissors and glue

Background Information:

The idea for this came from a lecture on learning styles and trying to include as many as possible into a lesson. For this exercise, divide students into three groups. Assign each group a rock type (I'd recommend making them draw from a hat, just to save the headache) and give them the information sheets on their type. The first step is for one reader to read the information aloud to the group. Next, ask the students to write the rock type on their poster and all the information. Then set them loose to draw and paste the pictures and samples on. Allow enough time for this final step so that they can completely fill up their poster. The last stage is presenting the posters. Make each group come up and explain their rock type to the rest of the class, as well as explaining the pictures they have on their poster. If you can, try to display the posters in the room for the rest of the physical geology unit.

Preparation:

It's a good idea to really hone down the rock information to the most basic and the most interesting for the info sheets. There are a lot of websites geared towards geology for kids. Search around to find really good pictures or samples that they can glue on. Also, when they present, tell them how awesome they are for not be afraid to talk in front of the class!!