

Project FOCUS  
Best Lessons  
THIRD GRADE

**Title of Lesson:** Rocks & Minerals

**Theme:** Earth/Space Science

**Unit Number:**           **Unit Title:** Rocks, Minerals, Soils, & Fossils

**Performance Standard(s) Covered (enter code):**

S3E1. Students will investigate the physical attributes of rocks and soils.

- a. Explain the difference between a rock and a mineral.
- b. Recognize the physical attributes of rocks and minerals using observation (shape, color, texture), measurement, and simple tests (hardness).
- c. Use observation to compare the similarities and differences of texture, particle size, and color in top soils (such as clay, loam or potting soil, and sand).
- d. Determine how water and wind can change rocks and soil over time using observation and research..

**Enduring Standards (objectives of activity):**

**Habits of Mind**

- Asks questions
- Uses numbers to quantify
- Works in a group
- Uses tools to measure and view
- Looks at how parts of things are needed
- Describes and compares using physical attributes
- Observes using senses
- Draws and describes observations

**Content (key terms and topics covered):**

Mineral

Rock Cycle

Rock

-Igneous Rock

-Sedimentary Rock

-Metamorphic Rock

Weathering

Erosion

Luster

Streak Test

**Learning Activity (description in steps)**

**Abstract (limit 100 characters):** Students will learn about rocks/minerals and how to classify rocks by their physical properties.

**Details:** This lesson spanned over three class periods. On the first day, we began discussing what rocks and minerals were and how they are different from one another. We then began to discuss the rock cycle and the three different types of rocks (igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary). We then moved on to classifying rocks by their physical properties (shape, color, luster, hardness, and texture). After forming a general basis of the knowledge, in small groups of no more than five, I would gather the students around the kidney table and read them a short book covering the information we covered in lecture. This served as a reinforcer. Per teacher's request, we then moved to the science workbook and completed essential questions throughout the section and finished up by answering CRCT questions covering those topics. For an interactive activity, in our small groups I allowed the kids to use their senses to classify rock. The students would feel the rock to describe the texture and use their sense of sight to describe its luster. We had a chart with the different properties we tested and allowed the students to test and describe six rocks. This gave them the opportunity to practice classifying rocks.

**Materials Needed (type and quantity):** Box of different types of rocks (1), Scratch Board (1), Textbook, Workbook

**Notes and Tips (general changes, alternative methods, cautions):** For precautionary measures, keep the box of rocks by you and only hand them out when they are describing them because they may get off task and/or do something to the rock that they should not be doing. I think it would have been more beneficial if I could have found a more hands on strategy of introducing the rocks and weathering/erosion lecture.

**Sources/References:**

- 1) Originally submitted by Jessica Valle, edited by Marcus Wilson (2012)
- 2) <https://www.georgiastandards.org>