

Preschool Rocks!

Activity: Children will explore, compare, contrast, and sort rocks.



Objective

Children will begin to demonstrate knowledge of earth science.

Targeted Standards

VI. Scientific Inquiry

VI. D.1. Demonstrates knowledge of the dynamic properties of earth and sky

Benchmark b. Discovers, explores, sorts, compares, and contrasts objects that are naturally found in the environment including rocks, soil, sand, and mud and recognizes relationships among the objects

http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com/standards.html#d=VI&a=four_year_olds

Extensions

- Go on a “rock hunt.” Take the children outdoors and challenge each child to find a special rock. Ask them to describe the rock. What is special about it? Write their observations on sticky notes and display the rocks in a “classroom rock gallery” or encourage children to take them home and share them with their families.
- Read the book, *Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran. Add some small boxes, stones, and marbles to your sand table and invite the children to play.
- Introduce rock related vocabulary such as: pebble, boulder, crystal, fossil, and geologist.
- Place rock related books in the reading center, some suggestions include:
 - *A Rock Can Be...* by Laura Purdie Salas
 - *If You Find a Rock*, by Peggy Christian
 - *National Geographic Readers: Rocks and Minerals*, by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld

Materials Needed

A variety of rocks
Containers for sorting
Magnifiers
Paper and crayons for drawing and labeling

Checking for Understanding

Children will demonstrate their understanding of the lesson by describing the rocks attributes and sorting them into categories.

Scaffolding

Provide hints and assistance, as necessary, to help the children compare and contrast the rocks. For example, “What do you notice about the way this rock feels? Are there other rocks that feel bumpy?”

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Procedures

1. Ask children to share what they know about rocks.
2. Invite children to be geologists, people who study rocks. Provide a variety of rocks for children to explore. Encourage them to look at them closely using magnifiers. What do they notice? What colors do they see? Does it sparkle? How does it feel? Is it smooth, rough, or bumpy?
3. How are the rocks alike? In what ways are they different? Provide several containers and encourage the children to sort the rocks. They may choose to sort by size, color, shape, texture, or type.
4. Invite children to draw the different categories/collections. Some children may choose to create labels for the collections (i.e., sparkly, smooth, lined, etc.).