THIS ROCKS! EXPLORE YOUR WORLD
Collecting rocks and testing their properties are simple ways to get at big questions about what are the ingredients of the planet under our feet.

SOLID DATA: PUT ROCKS TO THE TEST

Question for kids: What type of rock is this?
Identifying a rock can tell you all about its journey over time. Did the rock you hold in your hand get pushed up by a mountain range when the Earth was being formed? Or did it get blasted out of a volcano, rolled downstream, and crushed under a glacier? Or, did it sit quietly under a deep, blue lake that is now your own backyard? If we know if it’s an igneous, metamorphic, or sedimentary rock, we can better imagine its own amazing story.

WHAT IT TAKES

MATERIALS FOR THIS ACTIVITY:
- Mineral Test Kit
- Notebook
- Penny
- Vinegar
- Economy Rock Pick (Optional)
- Safety Impact Goggles, child-size (Optional)

FOLLOW THIS EASY STEP-BY-STEP ACTIVITY

In this activity, kids will actively test rocks to find out what types of minerals are inside. They will analyze the results and employ critical thinking. Don’t worry; they’ll think they’re just having fun!

Note: After each step, write the results down on a piece of paper or in your notebook.

1 Hardness test — Scratch the rock with a fingernail, a copper penny, a glass plate or nail, and a ceramic plate. Check your Guide to assign it a rating on the Mohs Scale of Hardness.

2 Color streak test — Test for the “color streak” of the minerals by rubbing the rock across the ceramic plate in the Mineral Test Kit, or across smooth cement. Look up which colors indicate which minerals are present.

3 Magnetism test — Hold the magnet in the Mineral Test Kit near your rock. If there is a magnetic pull, it has a metal mineral in it.

4 Acidity test — Put vinegar in the bottle included in the Mineral Test Kit. Squeeze out a few drops on the rock. If it fizzes, it contains carbonate.

5 Name that rock! Look at all the data you’ve collected. Use the Guide Book to compare the results and find which type of rock you have! See what category the specific type falls under (igneous, metamorphic, etc.) and imagine how it was formed.
BUY EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR THIS ACTIVITY IN ONE PLACE

See all of these products and more [here](#).

**SHOP**

*Mineral Test Kit*
Handy tools you’ll use

*Rocks, Minerals & Gems Golden Guide*
Info, pics & tips

*Economy Rock Pick*
(Optional)
A kid-sized favorite!

*Classroom Collection of Rocks and Minerals, 50 Specimens*
See all related products

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**A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU OUT**

- Every type of mineral has a specific rating on the Mohs Scale of Hardness. Talc (like talcum powder) is the softest, with a rating of 1. Diamonds are the hardest mineral on earth, with a rating of 10. Everything else falls somewhere in between.

- When doing the color streak test, the color left on the plate is the color of the mineral in its original, powdered form. If several minerals are present, you could see a variety of color streaks, depending on which mineral is producing the streak.

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**GO BEYOND THE ACTIVITY!**

- The tests often work best if you break the rock to expose a fresh, new surface to test, using a Rock Pick while wearing Safety Goggles (flying rock chips in the eye are no fun, but wearing goggles is seriously cool scientist stuff!).

- If your child gets the Rock Pick, you may want to surprise him/her with a set of Crack-Open Geodes. Smack ‘em to see what’s hiding inside: cool mineral deposits or beautiful crystals!

- Learn more about hardness testing, streak testing, cleavage, crystal formation and other ways to identify and classify minerals.

- Get a step-by-step online guide to rock analysis through close examination. Use the magnifier in the Mineral Test Kit to clearly see the crystals that make up your rock.

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**HELP**

NEED HELP WITH THIS ACTIVITY?

Call 1-800-860-6272 or email service@homesciencetools.com.