

The Rock Cycle

Cross-Curricular Focus: Earth Science



If you stand outside and look around you, you will see land. Land is made out of **rocks** and soil. A lot of the rocks are down under the soil. Rocks are solid things made out of one or more **minerals**. Minerals are tiny solids found in nature that have never been alive.

The rock cycle describes how rocks are formed, how they **break** apart, and how they are reformed into other kinds of rocks. When water, wind, chemicals, or growing plants cause rocks to break into smaller pieces, it is called **weathering**. Water causes most of the weathering of rocks. Many rocks have small cracks that can let in water. The cracks get bigger if the water freezes and then melts again, especially if it keeps on happening. The cracks finally get so big that the rock breaks into smaller pieces.

Layering is one way new rocks form. Tiny bits of rock and soil build up in layers over long periods of time. The more layers there are, the heavier they are. The top layers push down on the lower layers, and the bits of rock and soil cement together.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

- 1) What is land made out of? _____

- 2) What is rock made out of? _____

- 3) What does the rock cycle describe for us? _____

- 4) What is weathering? _____

- 5) How does water break a rock? _____

