

EVERYBODY NEEDS A ROCK

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READING THE BOOK

Discuss the story title with the class. After reading the story talk with the children about rocks that they have found.

DEVELOPING A ROCK UNIT

Rules for Finding Rocks

Have the children bring in their favorite rock or go for a walk around the neighborhood or on the playground and pick up rocks. If the class goes for a walk, suggest that children make a map of where they walked and where they found their rocks.

Discuss why the children selected a particular rock. The reasons will result in "rules" for picking rocks. Write children's exact words on large chart paper. Compare the rules that were selected by the class to the rules in the book. Discuss the rules that the class added or left out. This activity will provide children with an understanding of how rules are made.

Creating a Rock Center

Set up a rock center with interesting rocks.

MATERIALS:

Magnifying glasses	An assortment of rocks
Measuring tools Scales	
Mat	String
Uniform cubes, small blocks,	Scissors
or gram cubes Chart	paper

ACTIVITIES:

- Discuss with the children different ways to compare the rocks. Children can compare and categorize their rocks according to color, weight, size, texture, etc. Encourage children to predict which is the biggest rock, the heaviest, etc. If possible, use rocks that will pose contradictions to the children. For example, bring in a large rock that weighs less than a more dense small rock.
- Use different kinds of scales to weigh the rocks. Make a chart or use graph paper for the children to record how many cubes their rock weighed.
- Have a variety of books about rocks that children can use to do research. Some children may want to research their rocks in other places, books at home or in the library, talking to knowledgeable adults, etc.

* Adapted from Rhodes, L. (1981) Children's Literature: Activities and Ideas

Writing Activity

Choose several rocks and set each one on a single piece of paper. Place them on a table during center time and suggest that children who are interested may want to write down one or two words that describe each rock. Encourage children to use invented spelling.

Expanding the Theme

- Encourage children to suggest other activities for the center.
- Bring in a “Rock Hound” to share his/her knowledge with the children.
- Put out art materials (glue, markers, paint, pipe cleaners, buttons, craft eyes) with some rocks so that children can decorate their rocks, make people, animals, etc.
- Suggest that the children design and make a banner to draw attention to their center – “Everybody Needs A Rock.” If you have a computer available for children’s use, they could make a banner that way. Printing applications, like Print Shop, are available through AEA.
- Place some pebbles in a transparent jar and suggest that children may want to guess and record how many rocks are in the jar. Some days you may want to use large rocks and other days small ones so that children begin to understand that it takes fewer large items to fill the same space than it takes many small items.
- Remember, not all children need to engage in the same activities. Children use many different avenues to get to the same end.

GOALS

Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies:

- Comparing and Categorizing
- Mapping
- Awareness of different perspectives as children listen to each others’ ideas about rules for finding rocks

Literacy and Language:

- Verbalizing their ideas and their finds
- Oral language practice
- Print awareness:
 - Directionality (top to bottom, and left to right)
 - one-to-one correspondence between the spoken word and the written word
 - letter formation
 - letter-sound correspondence