

Candy Rock Cycle



Rocks are some of the oldest things on earth. In fact, you could say that the earth itself is just a huge rock while everything else sits on it. Rocks do make up the crust of the earth, but there are many types of rocks - not just one.

The three main types of rock are **sedimentary**, **metamorphic** and **igneous**. Each type is formed in a different way. The **rock cycle** describes how each type of rock has the potential to become a different type of rock, whether through weathering and erosion, cementation and compaction, heat and pressure, or melting and cooling.

Knowing the rock cycle helps us understand how our planet is always recycling itself. Besides, it can help you know where the rock you dug up in your yard, or found on vacation, may have once been. There is a diagram on the next page to help you.

Time:

Approximately 1 hour

Materials:

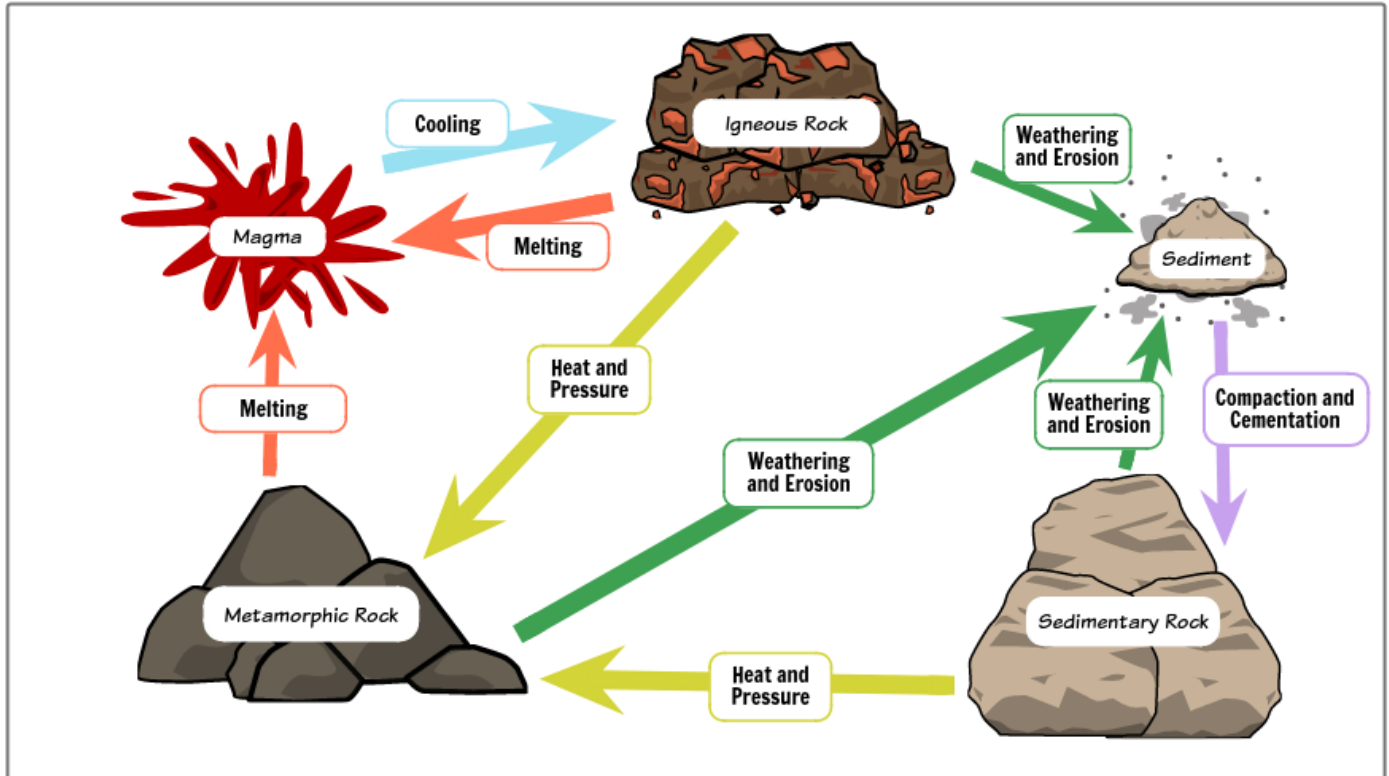
- Taffy-like candy, such as Starbursts in several colors
- Plastic knife
- Waxed paper
- Microwave-safe plate or bowl
- Spoon
- Microwave
- Hot pad

Rocks can be sorted by the way they were formed. This activity will help you understand how one type of rock can change into another type of rock. Work **with an adult** to complete the following steps:

1. Unwrap four or five candies of different colors and use a plastic knife to cut them into small pieces (about the size of a pea). The pieces will represent the sediment, or particles, that form **sedimentary** rocks.
2. Gather the candy pieces into a ball and gently press them together to form one big "rock". If the candies won't hold together, place a drop or two of water on them. Pressure is how a **sedimentary** rock is formed over a very long time.
3. Put the candy rock between two pieces of waxed paper. Use your hands to gently flatten the rock. If you do this several times, you create a **metamorphic** "rock."
4. Set the **metamorphic** rock on a microwave-safe plate or bowl and microwave it for 30 seconds. Use the hot pad to remove it from the microwave. BE CAREFUL! The plate or bowl will get HOT!
5. Gently stir the melted candy with a spoon. What you have made is called **magma**, like the lava that spills from a volcano.
6. Allow the candy to cool for at least five minutes. The candy is now an **igneous** "rock."

Note: If you were to break up the candy rock into small pieces, you would be starting the rock cycle all over again, **BUT DON'T DO IT!!!** Every experiment has its limits! The candy will be much harder to break up, and the pieces could explode in the microwave, instead of melting. Instead, go to the internet and read about the rock cycle.

The Rock Cycle



Share:

Take pictures of each step of your candy rock cycle and make your own poster, filling in the names of the types of candy rocks you made and using the diagram to figure out how one type of rock changes into another.

Post your collage on social media with the hashtag **#MCMuseumFromHome**.