Name: Date: Score: / 6

The Rock Cycle: Reading Comprehension

Nonfiction: Science · about 230 words

Read the passage. Then answer each question. Circle the best answer or write your answer on the lines.

The Rock Cycle

Rocks may seem like they last forever, but they are constantly changing. Over thousands and millions of years, rocks are broken down, melted, squeezed, and formed again. This never-ending process is called the rock cycle.

There are three main types of rocks. Igneous rocks form when melted rock cools and hardens. Deep underground, melted rock is called magma. When it erupts from a volcano, it is called lava. Granite is an igneous rock that cools slowly underground, giving it large crystals. Basalt cools quickly on the surface and has tiny crystals.

Sedimentary rocks form from small pieces of other rocks, shells, or plants. Wind, water, and ice wear rocks down into tiny bits called sediment through a process called weathering. Rivers carry the sediment and drop it in layers, often in lakes or oceans. Over time, the layers are pressed and cemented together. Sandstone and limestone are sedimentary rocks. Fossils are usually found in these rocks.

Metamorphic rocks form when existing rocks are changed by intense heat and pressure deep within Earth, without melting. The word metamorphic means "changed form." Limestone can become marble, and shale can become slate.

Any type of rock can become any other type. An igneous rock can weather into sediment and become sedimentary rock. A sedimentary rock can be squeezed into metamorphic rock. If metamorphic rock melts, it becomes magma, and the cycle starts again.

1. **Main idea:** What is this passage mostly about?
   A. how rocks form and change in the rock cycle B. how to collect rocks C. how to find fossils D. how volcanoes erupt

2. **Detail:** How do igneous rocks form?
   A. from layers of sediment B. from heat without melting C. when melted rock cools and hardens D. from shells only

3. **Inference:** Why does granite have large crystals?
   A. It cools quickly on the surface. B. It is very old. C. It is made of shells. D. It cools slowly underground.

4. **Vocabulary:** Weathering is...
   A. the forming of crystals B. the wearing down of rocks into small pieces C. the melting of rock D. a kind of storm

5. **Detail:** What can limestone become with heat and pressure?
   A. granite B. marble C. basalt D. sandstone

6. **Detail:** What does the word metamorphic mean?

ANSWER KEY

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