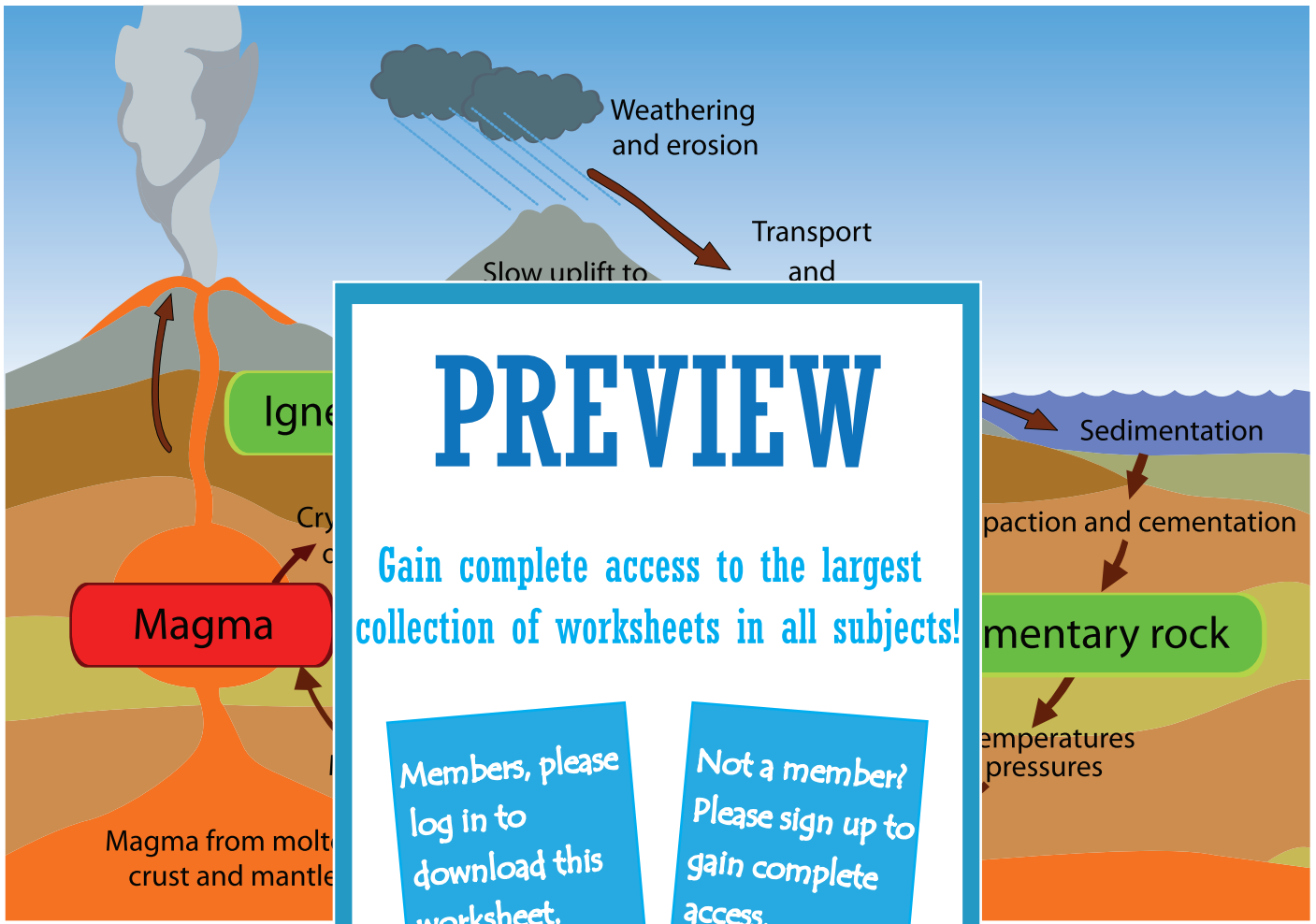


The Rock Cycle

by Katie Clark



Nature is full of patterns. You can see patterns in the way that butterflies and frogs all follow a cycle. You can see patterns in the way that plants grow. Like a set of rules that

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Rocks are one thing in nature that follow a cycle. While rocks may seem lifeless and boring, this is not true. There are many types of rocks, and each one is formed differently. In fact, one type of rock can even turn into another type of rock over time.

Three main types of rocks make up all the other types. These main types of rock are sedimentary rocks, metamorphic rocks, and igneous rocks. They are each part of the rock cycle.

Sedimentary rocks are the first type. They are small bits and pieces of rock that break off larger rocks. Wind, water, people, or animals might carry the small bits away. This process is called weathering and erosion. It is the time when natural processes break up the rock faces.

These small bits of rock gather in riverbeds or canyons. Over time, other bits and pieces of rock cover the sediment. This is called deposition.

That brings us to metamorphic rocks. When rocks are placed under great pressure and heat, they are called metamorphic rocks. They might break apart once more. They might also keep going to the next part of the rock cycle.

The last part of the rock cycle is called igneous rocks. This means these types of rocks are formed from magma.

When extremely hot magma reaches the Earth's surface, it can form igneous rocks. The magma can cool in the ground during the heating and cooling process.

As the magma cools into rock, it may cool fast or slow. The rate at which it cools can also determine what kind of igneous rock it becomes. This is part of a process called crystallization.

The rock cycle is happening all around us. Large rocks chip away to form sedimentary rocks. The sedimentary rocks are pressed down in rivers and canyons until

metamorphic rocks form. When rocks and natural debris, they break into solid rock. This process is called metamorphism. They might break apart once more. They might also keep going to the next part of the rock cycle.

Igneous means fire. This type of rock is formed from magma.

The magma runs along the surface and forms igneous rocks. The magma can cool in the ground during the heating and cooling process. As the magma cools into rock, it may cool fast or slow. The rate at which it cools can also determine what kind of igneous rock it becomes. This is part of a process called crystallization.

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they are formed into metamorphic rocks. When metamorphic rock is placed under extreme heat, it is formed into magma. When the magma cools, it becomes an igneous rock.

This is just one of the many cycles in nature on which we can count. Nature rocks!

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The Rock Cycle

1) What are the three types of rocks?

2) How are sedimentary rocks formed?

3) Match each rock

Type of Rock	Characteristic
Metamorphic	...des a process called ...d erosion.
Igneous	...formed under ...
Sedimentary	...in due to the ...of magma.

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4) The magma runs

True False

5) What do we call the process of the wind, water, people, or animals carrying the small bits of rocks away?

- a) deposition
- b) solidification
- c) crystallization
- d) weathering and erosion