

## Rock Observation Lab

Around the classroom sit a variety of rocks. Each of these rocks were formed and shaped differently. They all came from different environments. They were all chipped, chiseled, beaten, weathered and moved until they ended up sitting on your desks. In this lab you will hone in on your ability to observe and to put those observations into words. You will also be asked to infer, based on previous experiences and knowledge, some of the process and environments that these rocks were formed by and in. Use the magnifying glasses to get on a more personal level with your rocks. You will have 4 minutes per rock to make your observations.

Some environments to choose from: swamp, shallow sea, deep sea, crack in another rock, magma, lava, windy, deep in the crust, the mantle, rivers, lakes, landslides, glacial, flood plains, deserts, beaches, deltas, reefs, any other type you can think of. As you choose an environment, be prepared to justify what make you think it formed there.

### Rock 1

1. What are three physical observations that you can make about this rock?
2. Which of the three rock types do you think it belongs?
3. What type of environment would you expect this type of rock to be formed in? Justify your answer.

### Rock 2

4. What are three physical observations that you can make about this rock?
5. Which of the three rock types do you think it belongs?
6. What type of environment would you expect this type of rock to be formed in? Justify your answer.

### Rock 3

7. What are three physical observations that you can make about this rock?
8. Which of the three rock types do you think it belongs?
9. What type of environment would you expect this type of rock to be formed in?

### Rock 4

10. What are three physical observations that you can make about this rock?
11. Which of the three rock types do you think it belongs?
12. What type of environment would you expect this type of rock to be formed in? Justify your answer.

## Teacher reflection and instructions

- Materials:
  - Multiple rocks and rock types
  - Magnifying glasses at least one per table
- This assignment is designed to help students be observant. Students will get a chance to really look at four different rocks taking inferred guesses as to what type of rock they have and what type of environment would the rock have formed under.
- It is important to note that up to this point students have only read about the three rock types. We haven't really discussed them yet, so I accept any answer that can be justified by their pre-existing knowledge.
- I let my students work in random table groups of four, with four rocks at each table. I try to make sure that the rocks around the table have at least 1 of each of the three rock types.
- When the class is done with their observations, I have each group pick their most interesting rock and then present their observations to the class.