

Tips for Pebbles, Sand, and Silt

I gave the post-assessment to the students prior to teaching the unit. By doing this, I have the opportunity to see what the students already know about the subject. At the end of the unit, I gave the exact assessment again so that the students could see where and how much they improved.

For all four investigations, I presented the vocabulary the students would encounter throughout the lessons. Students would record the words in their science notebooks and I made a word search for each of the sets of words. (See the attached sample.)

Investigation 1: First Rocks

- 1.1 Three Rocks: Put the three different rocks in separate sandwich bags for each student. This makes for easy distribution and access the next time you teach the kit.
- 1.2 Washing Three Rocks: Encourage students to put one rock at a time in the water and take time to observe with the hand lens.
- 1.5 Start a Rock Collection: Have egg cartons available for students who bring in rocks for display.

Investigation 2: River Rocks

- 2.1 Screening River Rocks: Some students will have a hard time sorting the rocks while other students will be able to do so rather quickly. Remember that the process is more than the product.
- 2.2 River Rocks by Size: Limit the amount of rocks the children glue on their sheets.
- 2.3 Sand and Silt: Add about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of powdered clay into the dry sand when getting ready for this investigation.
- 2.4 Exploring Clay: Sometimes the clay can dry out and be very difficult to cut. If this happens, just add a bit of water to soften the clay.

Investigation 3: Using Rocks

- 3.1 Rocks in Use: Include a sheet of paper for the students to take notes on.
- 3.2 Looking at Sandpaper: Make certain the kit has all three types of sandpaper: fine, medium, and coarse.

- 3.3 3.4 and 3.5 A lot of the materials you need for these parts are not in the kit. The lessons are more "artsy" than scientific. Not doing these parts does not affect the desired outcome of this unit.

Investigation 4: Soil Explorations

- 4.1 Homemade Soil: This can be very messy. It helps to have sort of tray for the students to work on.
- 4.2 Soil Search: Make a plan for where the students can go in search of the soil.
- 4.5 Fossils: If students are very interested in fossils and dinosaurs, this part of the unit can be extended. Add books and I definitely recommend the video that comes with the unit called "I Dig Fossils."

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