

Three Kinds of Rock



Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

Rocks come in three kinds, sorted by how they form.

Igneous rocks form when magma, melted rock from deep inside the Earth, cools and hardens. Deep underground, magma hardens very slowly, so its mineral grains have a long time to grow, and they grow large. Magma that erupts cools quickly, so its grains stay tiny, or it turns into volcanic glass.

Sedimentary rocks are made from pieces of older rocks or of things that were once alive.

Weathering loosens pieces of rock, and erosion carries them away. Buried deep, the pieces are pressed together and cemented into new rock. Others form from shells, plants, or minerals left behind when water dried up.

Metamorphic rocks have been changed from what they were before by high heat, high pressure or hot fluids rich in minerals.

1. What are the three kinds of rock?

2. What is magma?

3. Why does magma that cools underground make large grains?

4. A rock is made of small pieces stuck together, like sand. Which kind of rock do you think it is, and why?

Answer key

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1. What are the three kinds of rock?
Igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic.
2. What is magma?
Melted rock from deep inside the Earth.
3. Why does magma that cools underground make large grains?
It cools very slowly, so the mineral grains have a long time to grow.
4. A rock is made of small pieces stuck together, like sand. Which kind of rock do you think it is, and why?
Sample answer: sedimentary, because sedimentary rocks are made from pieces of older rocks pressed and cemented together.