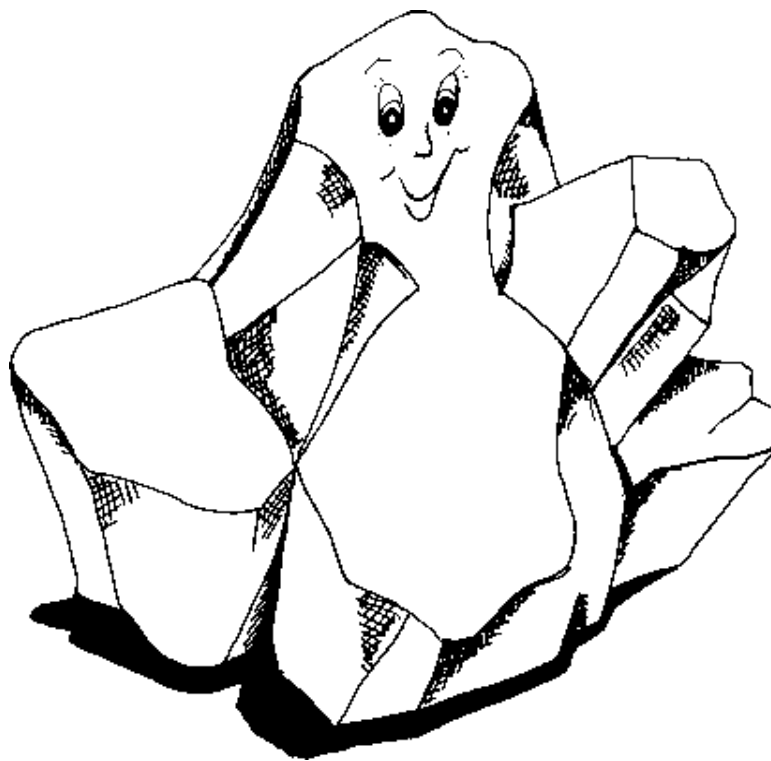


If A Rock Could Talk, What Would It Say?



Written by Elizabeth Hunter
Illustrated by Kerry Perkins

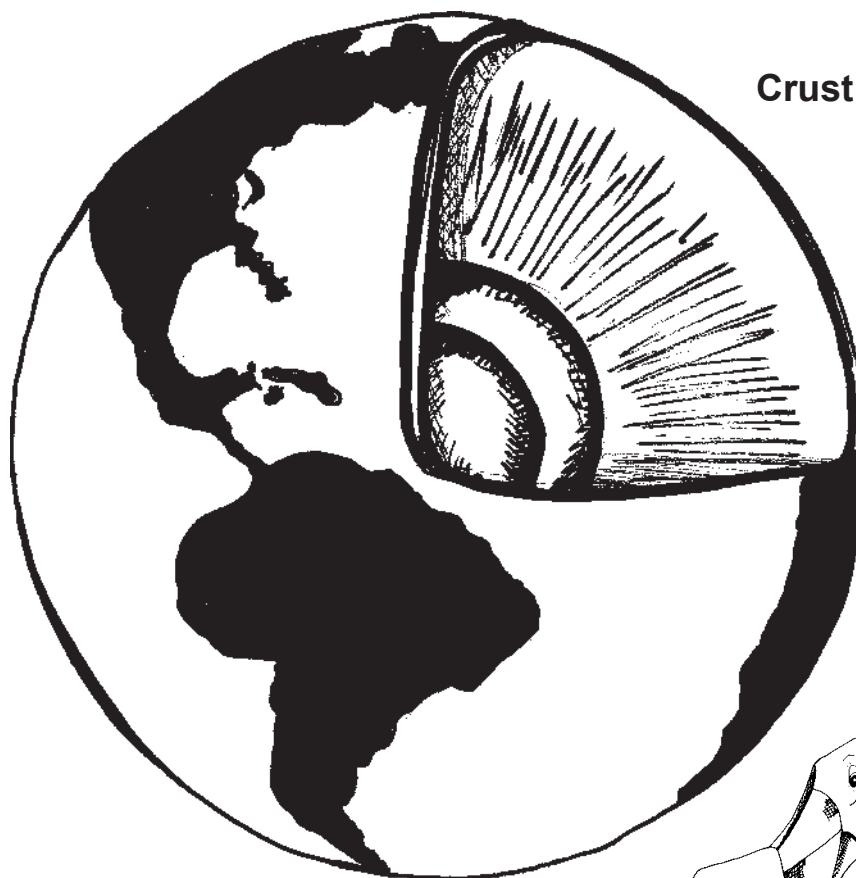


If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might begin by saying, “Look up, look down, look all around. The mountain you see is made of rock. The gravel you’re standing on is broken up pieces of rock. Rock is everywhere. Our planet Earth is made mainly of rock!”

If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might decide to tell you about the Earth's crust. "The crust is the outside layer of the Earth. It is about 30 kilometres thick underneath the topsoil in which the grass and trees grow. Under the deep seas and oceans the crust is only about 8 kilometres thick. Compared to the core at the centre of the earth, geologists consider the crust to be light."

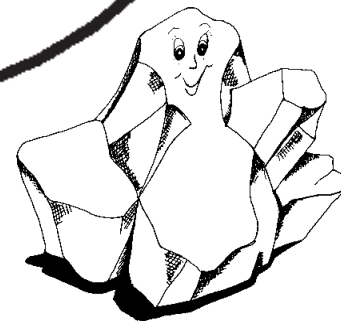
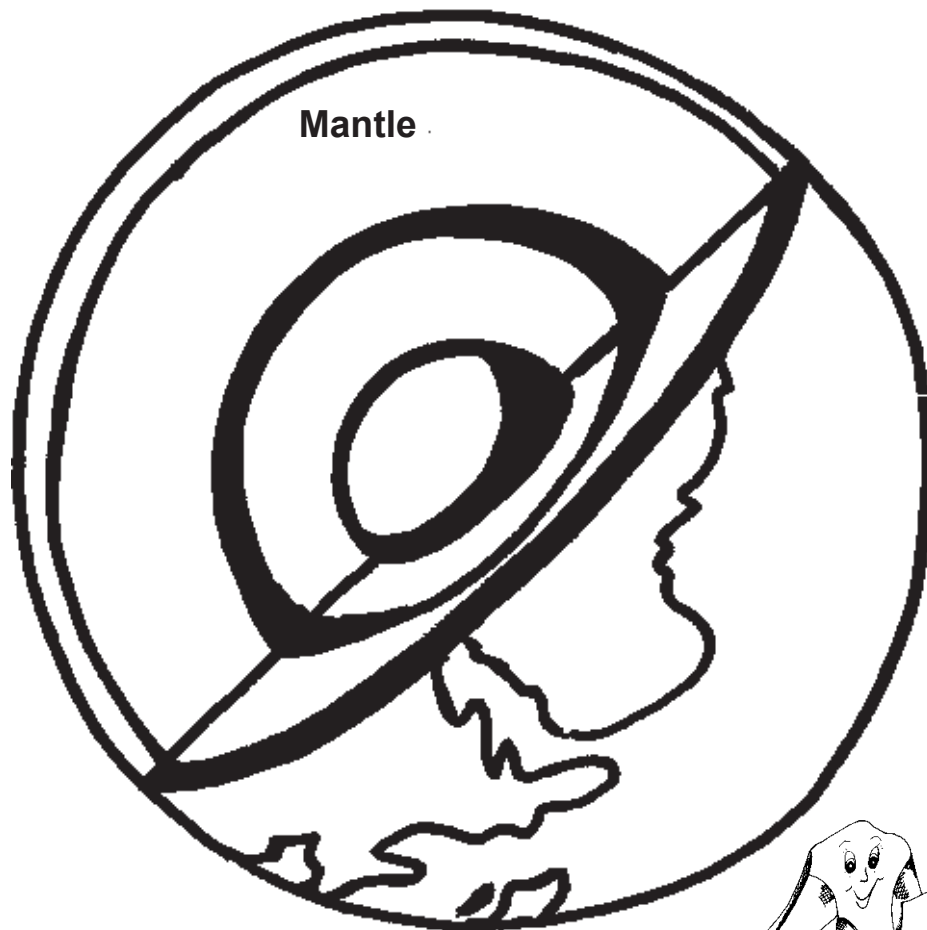


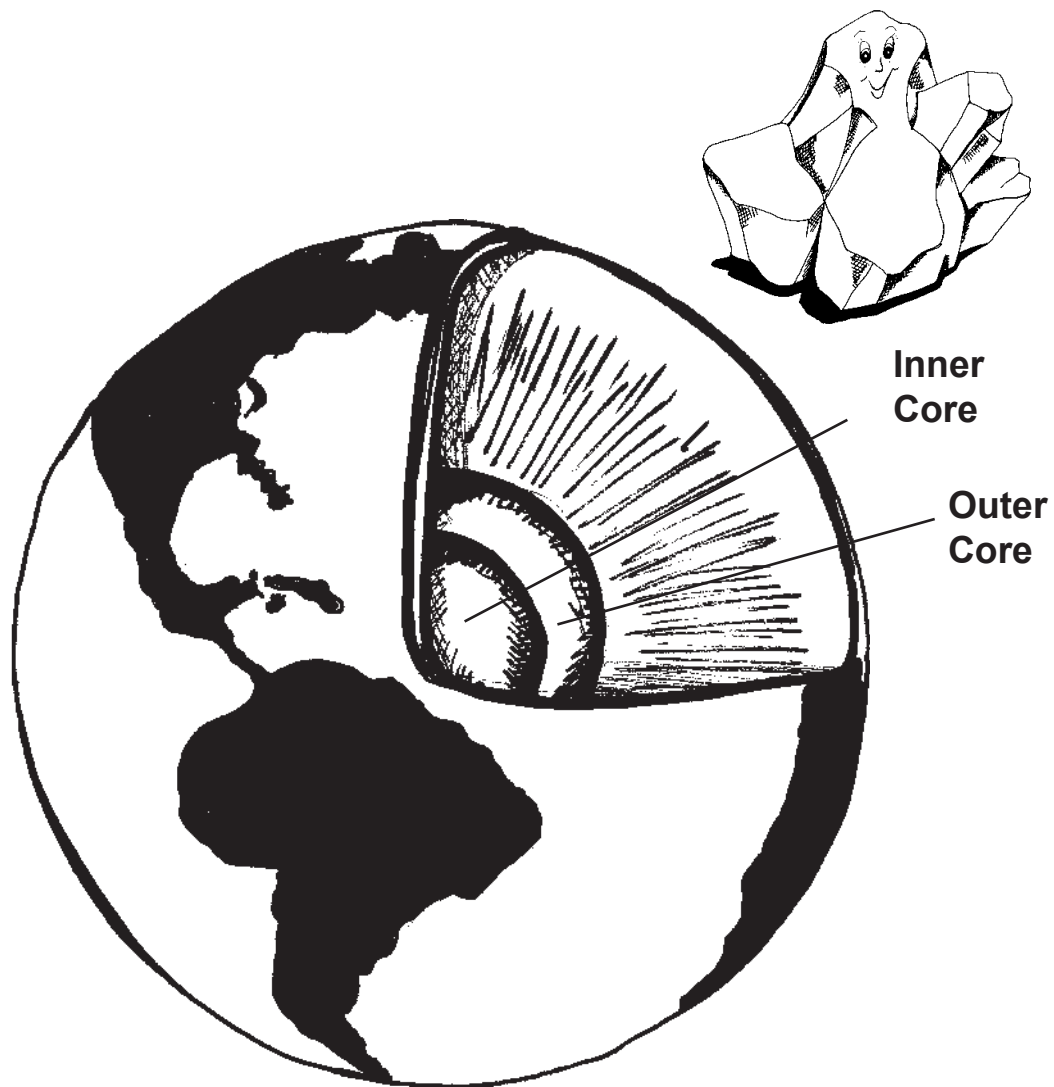
Crust



If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might decide to tell you about the Earth's mantle. "The mantle is below the crust and is an amazing 2900 kilometres thick. It's hard to know for sure, but geologists think the upper section is fairly solid, while the lower section may be partially fluid."





If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might decide to tell you about the Earth's heavy core. "It's impossible to know for sure, but it appears that there is an inner and outer core. The inner core, at the very centre of the Earth is heavy and solid. The outer core, just below the mantle, is hot liquid rock called magma."

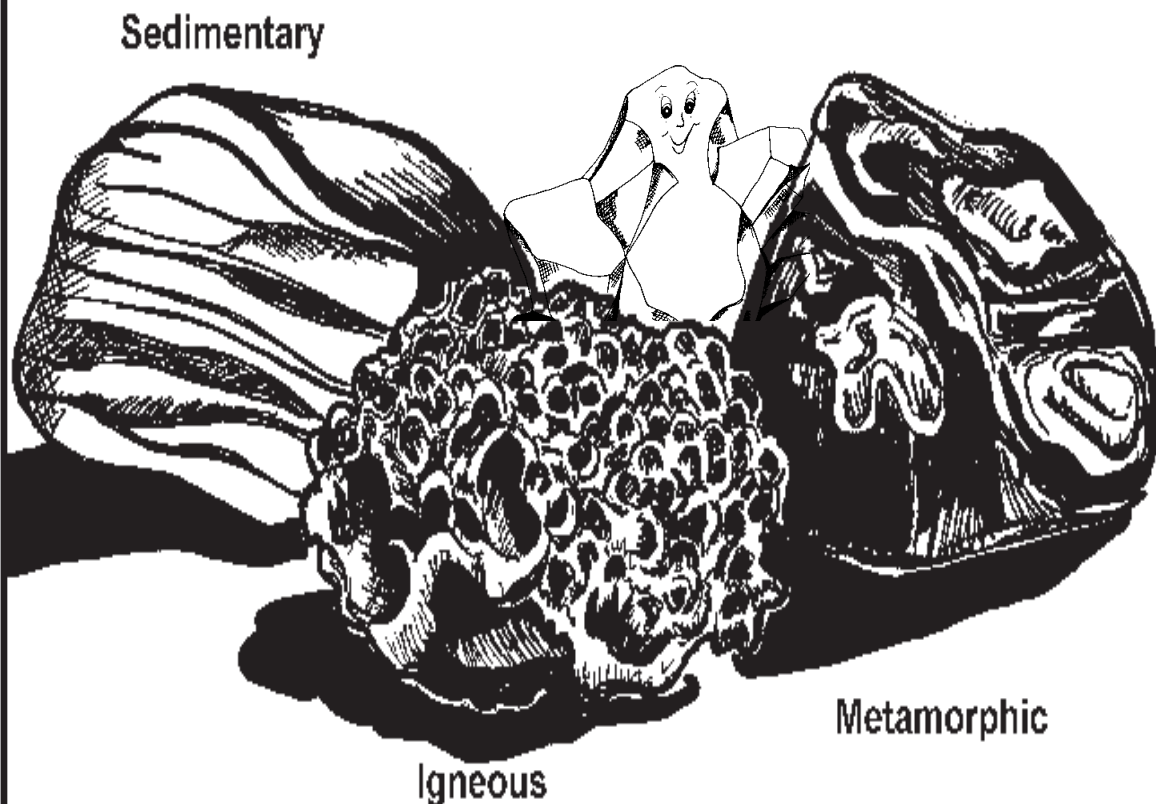


If a rock could talk, what would it say?

Just like people, that would depend on the rock. “Some rocks look alike, but others can be very different. Rocks can be one colour or many and can be rough or smooth as glass. What a rock looks like depends on what minerals the rock is made of. Minerals can be shiny or dull, soft or hard. When some minerals are broken, they shatter into all different shapes. Others break into the same shape, over and over again.”

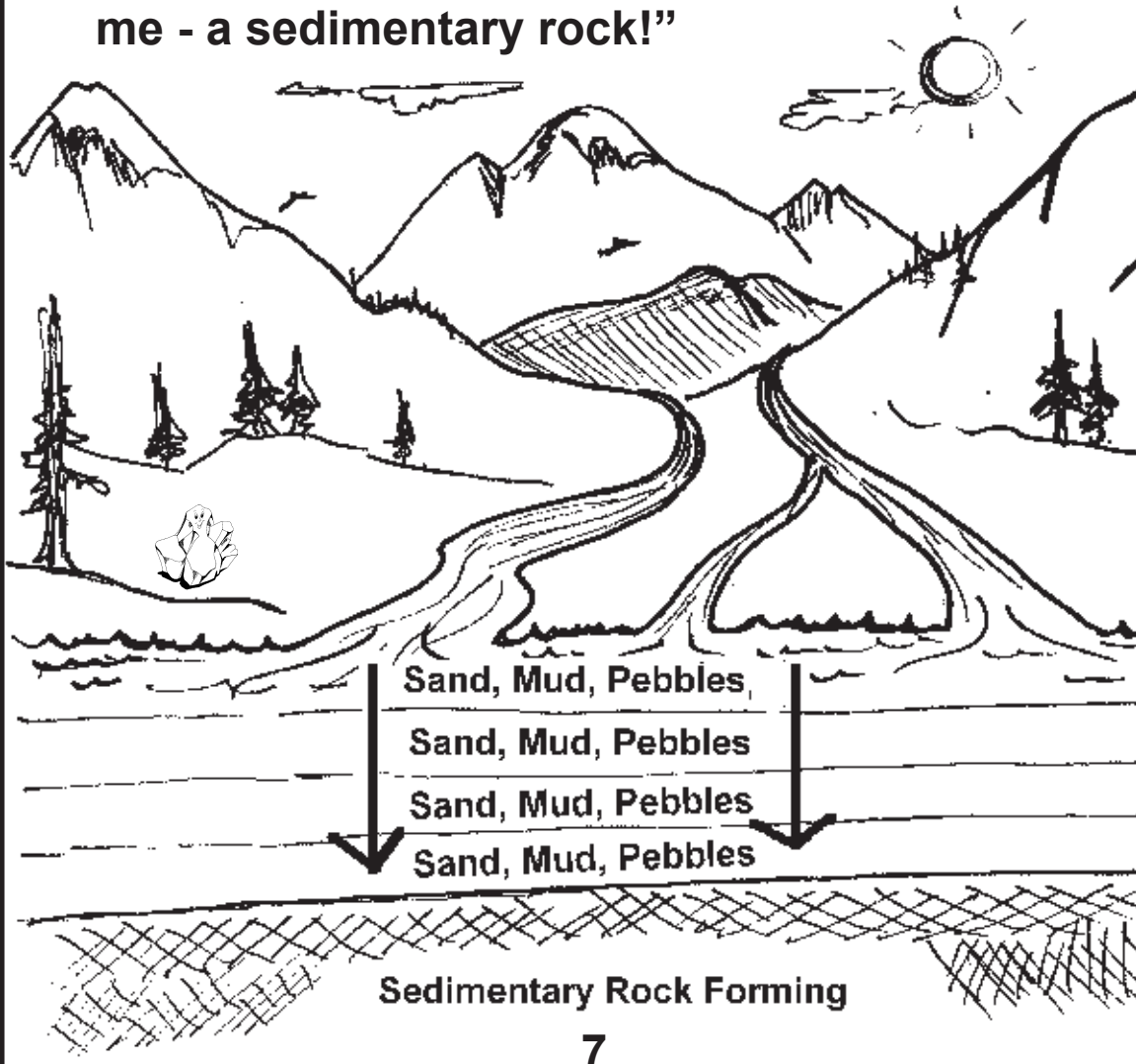
If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might tell you its life story. “There are three main types of rocks. They are called sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic. Each has its own story to tell because each is formed in a different way.”



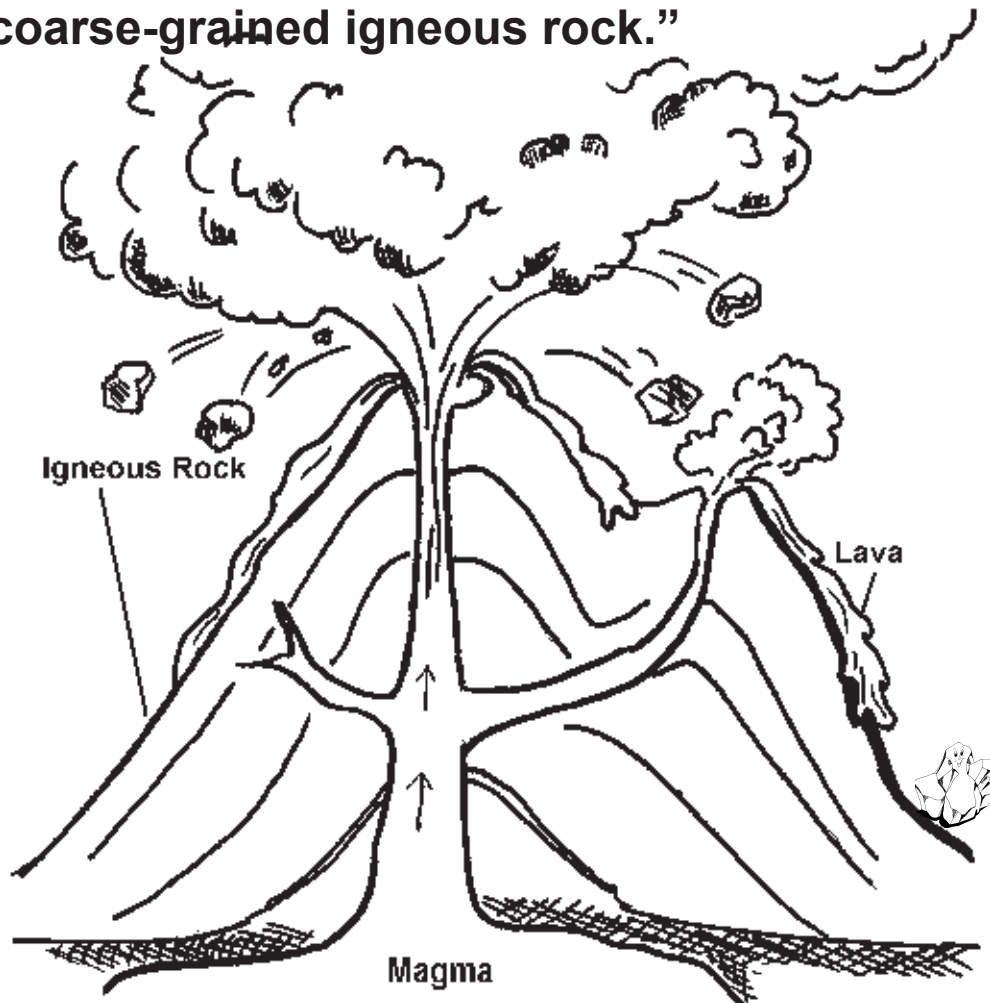
If a rock could talk, what would it say?

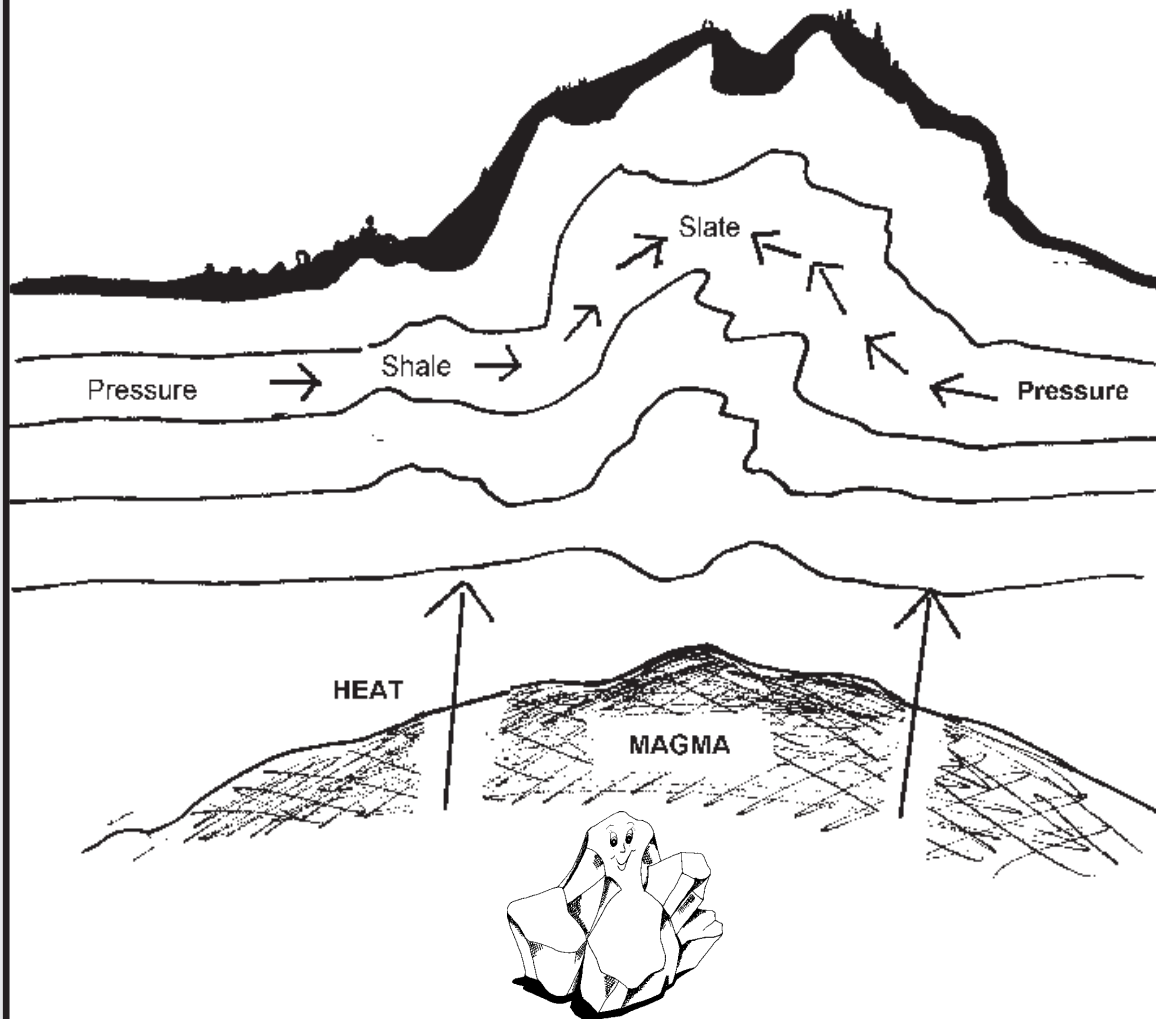
A sedimentary rock might say, “I’m formed from small particles of sand, dirt, bits of rock and even broken sea shells. These small pieces are called sediment. Sediment collects in layers on the ocean floor as well as in valleys. Over hundreds and thousands of years, layer upon layer of sediment builds up, slowly pressing together. Eventually it turns into a rock like me - a sedimentary rock!”



If a rock could talk, what would it say?

An igneous rock might say, “I am formed from burning, liquid rock, called magma. The word igneous actually means fire. When a volcano erupts, magma from deep inside the earth is pushed to the surface to run out as lava. It cools fairly quickly and becomes a fine grained rock like me - an igneous rock! Sometimes the magma does not break through the earth. It cools down very slowly, below the earth’s surface. It becomes a coarse-grained igneous rock.”





If a rock could talk, what would it say?

A metamorphic rock might say, “I am a rock that has changed my form. Meta means change and morph means form or shape. I get formed when an igneous or sedimentary rock, or sometimes even another metamorphic rock, gets changed due to extreme pressure, heat or powerful chemicals. This change usually occurs deep within the earth.”



If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might decide to tell you about erosion. “Erosion wears a rock down, sometimes until there’s nothing left. Running water, including rain, rivers, and waves that come in close to shore can all erode a rock. So can the slowly moving ice of a glacier. Wind and gravity can also cause a rock to erode.”

If a rock could talk, what would it say?

It might ask you a question! “Did you know that soil or dirt is made from rocks? It is! The soil that plants grow in is made up of the minerals from broken down, disintegrating rocks and from rotting organic material, such as leaves and stumps.”

