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"I, Rock: A Geology Tale" Lesson Plan Guide

by Katie Slivensky

Unit Overview

Duration: 1 week

Grade Level: 3-5

Program: Orange Blossom Nonfiction Award

Subject Integration: Science (Earth science, geology), ELA

Essential Question: *How do rocks record Earth's long geological history, and how can storytelling make science more memorable?*

Learning Objectives — Students will be able to:

- Sequence the major events in Rock's geological journey
- Identify key geological processes (volcanic activity, erosion, sedimentation) described in the book
- Explain how rocks can provide evidence about Earth's history
- Evaluate how the author uses humor and narrative voice to teach science content
- Express understanding through science journaling and creative writing

ONE-WEEK LESSON PLAN

Day 1: Meet Rock: A Story Underground

Objective: Introduce Rock's origin beneath Earth's crust

Materials: Book, Earth's layers diagram

Opening (10 min):

- Quick-write: "If a rock could talk, what do you think it would want to tell us?"
- Partner share

Main Activity (30 min):

- Read the introduction of Rock's story beneath Earth's crust
- Label a simple diagram of Earth's layers
- Discuss: What does Rock's beginning teach us about where rocks come from?

Closing (5 min):

- Exit ticket: "Where does Rock's journey begin?"

Assessment: Comprehension of Earth's layers, listening skills

Day 2: A Volcanic Blast

Objective: Explore volcanic activity as a geological process

Materials: Book, volcano diagram, science vocabulary cards

Opening (10 min):



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- Discussion: "What do you already know about volcanoes?"

Main Activity (30 min):

- Read the section where Rock is propelled onto land by a volcanic blast
- Discuss how volcanic eruptions move rock material from underground to the surface
- Label a simple volcano diagram with key vocabulary (magma, lava, eruption)

Closing (5 min):

- Exit ticket: "How did the volcano change Rock's journey?"

Assessment: Science vocabulary, comprehension of volcanic processes

Day 3: Storms, Earthquakes, and Dinosaurs

Objective: Sequence major events in Rock's journey across geological time

Materials: Book, sequencing timeline

Opening (10 min):

- Think-pair-share: "What do you think has changed most about Earth since the time of dinosaurs?"

Main Activity (30 min):

- Read the sections describing storms, earthquakes, and dinosaur encounters
- Build a class timeline sequencing Rock's major life events
- Discuss: How do natural events like storms and earthquakes change rocks over time?

Closing (5 min):

- Exit ticket: "What is one event from Rock's journey you found most exciting?"

Assessment: Sequencing accuracy, science comprehension

Day 4: Deep-Sea Adventures

Objective: Explore how rocks travel through water and settle over time

Materials: Book, ocean/erosion diagram

Opening (10 min):

- Discussion: "How do you think water can move or change a rock?"

Main Activity (30 min):

- Read the section on Rock's deep-sea adventures
- Discuss erosion, sediment, and how rocks travel through water over time
- Connect Rock's journey to the rock cycle as a broader science concept

Closing (5 min):

- Exit ticket: "How does water change or move rocks over time?"

Assessment: Understanding of erosion and the rock cycle

Day 5: Rock's Journey Ends (For Now) at a Student's Shoe

Objective: Synthesize learning about geological history and storytelling in science



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Materials: Writing and drawing supplies, project choice cards

Opening (10 min):

- Preview project options; students select and begin

Main Activity (30 min):

- Option A: Create an illustrated timeline of Rock's full journey, labeling each geological process
- Option B: Write a short "autobiography" from the point of view of a different rock or mineral
- Option C: Analytical paragraph — "How does Slivensky use humor and narrative voice to make geology memorable?"
- Share work in pairs or small groups

Closing (5 min):

- Class closing: "One geology fact I'll remember from this book is..."

Assessment: Science comprehension, creative and analytical writing quality

Differentiation

- **Advanced learners:** Research the rock cycle in more depth and create a diagram showing how rocks transform between types
- **Students needing support:** Provide visual diagrams and vocabulary cards throughout the unit
- **English Language Learners:** Pre-teach key science vocabulary (volcano, erosion, sediment, crust) with pictures
- **Hands-on learners:** If possible, bring in real rock samples for students to examine and describe

Materials List

- Class set of "I, Rock: A Geology Tale"
- Earth's layers and volcano diagrams
- Science vocabulary cards
- Sequencing timeline template
- Writing and drawing supplies for Day 5