The Rock Cycle

A **rock** is a solid made up of a bunch of different minerals. The three main types of rocks are igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary.

Metamorphic Rocks

Metamorphic rocks are formed by heat and pressure. These rocks are found inside the Earth's crust where there is enough heat and pressure to form the rocks. These rocks are often made from other types of rocks. For example, shale can be changed into a metamorphic rock such as slate. Examples of metamorphic rocks include marble, soapstone and schist.

Igneous Rocks

Igneous rocks are formed by volcanoes. When a volcano erupts it spews out molten rock called magma. Eventually the magma cools down and it hardens. It will either harden just below the Earth's surface or it will harden when it reaches the Earth's surface. The hardened magma is called igneous rock. Examples of igneous rocks include basalt and granite.

Sedimentary Rocks

Sedimentary rocks are formed by years of sediment compacting together and becoming hard. A water body like a stream will carry lots of small pieces of rocks and minerals to a larger body of water. These pieces will settle at the bottom and over a really long time they will form into a solid rock. Examples of sedimentary rock include shale, limestone, and sandstone.

The Rock Cycle

The rock cycle describes the journey of rocks from the Earth's surface. During the rock cycle, rocks from deep in the Earth, move and sometimes change, go up to the surface, and they will even return to below the ground.

Rocks are constantly changing and it sometimes takes millions of years for rocks to change form. Rocks can change from one type of rock to another and back to the first form it was.

The rock cycle tells us what needs to happen in order for a rock to change. For example, igneous rock needs to be weathered or broken down into sediment and then compacted to change into a sedimentary rock.

Igneous to Sedimentary	
Sedimentary to Metamorphic	
Metamorphic to Igneous	