

Rocks

Approach: One to one

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Focus: Describe, differentiate and suggest human uses for different rocks.

Resources: Hand lens, 3 rocks —sandstone, greenstone, pumice.

Questions/instructions:

Put 3 rocks in front of student.

In this activity we will be looking at some rocks found in New Zealand. You can pick them up. Use the hand lens to have a really good look at them.

Give the student the hand lens. Allow time for student to examine all 3 rocks.

1. Now we'll talk about each rock, starting with rock 1 [sandstone]. Try to tell me all of the things that you have noticed about this rock?

2. How is this rock different from other rocks?

	% responses	
	y4	y8
Sandstone:		
layered	56	60
light brown/yellow	31	39
gritty/sandy	47	22

3. Some rocks are used by people. What might this rock be used for?

abrasive	10	12
decorative use	19	22

Show rock 2: greenstone.

4. Now look at the rock labelled 2. Tell me all the things that you noticed about this rock?

	% responses	
	y4	y8
5. How is this rock different from other rocks?		
Greenstone:		
very hard	9	7
green, smooth	86	84
beautiful when polished	55	
great cultural significance to Māori	8	10
6. Some rocks are used by people. What might this rock be used for?		
jewellery, ornaments	72	89
weapons (mainly ceremonial now)	6	17
cutting tool	4	6
status, 'mana'	1	1
Show rock 3: pumice.		
7. Now look at the rock labelled 3. Try to tell me all the things that you noticed about this rock?		
8. How is this rock different from other rocks?		
Pumice:		
very light, full of air holes	86	86
very rough, gritty	30	29
abrasive	34	46
9. Some rocks are used by people. What might this rock be used for?		
gardening/ gardening materials	6	5

Commentary:

Year 4 and year 8 students performed quite similarly on this task.