

The hidden dinosaurs...

Why do we find so many fossils on the island?

Because it is made up of sedimentary rock!

Student Introduction

- ▶ Let us help you find out how fossils are formed and discovered!
- ▶ See why sedimentary rocks are more likely to contain fossils!



Understanding Sedimentary Rock

There are three main types of rock: sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic.

The diagram shows how the rock cycle works:

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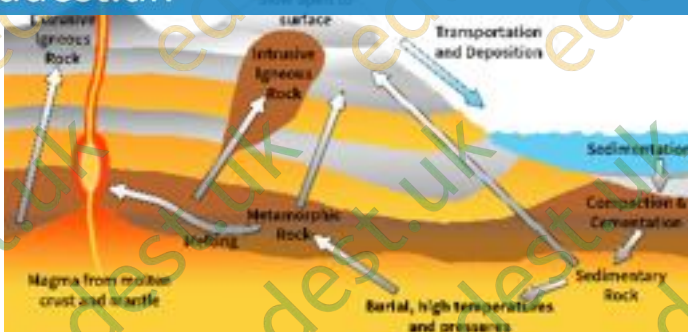
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- ▶ These rocks eventually form layers: these are called sediments, hence the name sedimentary rock. This is called sedimentation.
- ▶ As these layers build up, the ones below are squashed tightly together (compaction), water is pushed out and crystals form - these act like a glue that holds the rocks together. This is called cementation.
- ▶ This process can take millions of years.

During your visit to the museum today you will see many fossilised items.

Can you find answers to the following questions?



Examples of sedimentary rocks include:

- ✓ siltstone
- ✓ chalk
- ✓ shale
- ✓ sandstone
- ✓ limestone

Questions (continued on page 2...)

1. How do you think the fossils of animals or plant get into the sedimentary rock?

Questions

2. Why are fossils 'rock coloured'?

3. What are the best places to go and find fossils, and why?

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Cretaceous period

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- ▶ Scientists do not yet know the reason for this but there are theories
- ▶ It must have been something that affected the whole planet, as so many life forms died
- ▶ What do you think caused the extinction?

Theories about extinction include:

- A. an asteroid impact
- B. intense volcano activity
- C. a gradual change and shift in climate and sea-levels, affecting the food-chain

Questions

4. Which of the theories do you think the most likely? Explain why.

5. How would this event have affected the planet and the life forms there?



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