EVERYONE NEEDS A ROCK

BACKGROUND
Throughout time, societies have valued rocks and mineral resources in their natural state. Even today nobody really knows the significance of the great stone circle of Stonehenge, but an early society may have placed the huge stones there to mark the seasons and cycles of the year. Easter Island has monolithic stone figures carved by unknown ancients. Each year thousands of people travel to the western United States to see Devil’s Tower, Yellowstone National Park, Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park, the Grand Canyon, and Yosemite. Yes, man has always had strong feelings about rocks and mineral resources.

In many cities, and certainly at most major universities, one can find museums housing remarkable geologic collections of minerals, rocks, gems and fossils. But there are also rocks and mineral resources to be appreciated in almost every neighborhood. The first step in discovering some of these natural wonders is to look.

PREPARATION
Obtain the book Everybody Needs a Rock by Byrd Baylor (available at the library, or for sale through many bookstores)

LEARNING ACTIVITY
Ask the students the following questions to assess their knowledge or to stimulate interest in the activity:

What are five ways we use rocks?

Have you made a rock creation? If so, describe it.

1. Discuss, with the students, where rocks come from and why they are important.

2. Read the story Everybody Needs a Rock aloud to the class.
3. Have each student write or tell his own personal rule #11 based on the story.

4. Take the class rock hunting. Rules 1 through 10 must be used. The students will learn these as you read the story. A review may be needed. Be sure to remind them to use their own rule #11. This could be done as a field trip to a canyon or a park or a walk on the school grounds. Each student should collect one rock.

5. Perform the “smelling test” as outlined in the story. Have the students share with the class where their rock came from.

Check for Understanding

Have the students write a story about where their rock came from. Have them illustrate their stories.

To Know and Do More

Students can investigate their rock further, identifying whether their rock is igneous sedimentary or metamorphic, the name of the rock, the mineral content in their rock, etc.

Do the activity “Life of A Rock” or “Memory Stones”.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Stonehenge was constructed in three stages over a time span of 1000 years using blue stone and sandstone.