



## Match Rock

Tall dark and handsome rocks!

The objective of this activity is to figure out who has your

matching rock type. Find your rock partner by reading a description of their rock.

This is a matchmaking/icebreaker activity that can be used to introduce students to each other and to improve communication and writing skills.

### Materials:

- Rocks of various geneses (i.e. Granite, marble, sandstone, mudstone, gneiss, basalt, etc..)
- Hammer
- Surface to break rocks
- Rock identification supplies
  - Magnifying lens
  - Vinegar
- Tape
- Paper or note cards

***They call me Sandy...  
and I like walks on a  
well-compacted beach.***

### Prep:

Break rocks in half or into sizes large enough for participants to investigate and describe.

### To do and notice:

This activity requires an even number of participants. The instructor or leader can choose to participate to make the number of participants even.

- 1) Mix up the appropriate number of pieces and pass out one rock sample to each participant. Be careful not to let other participants see who gets which sample.
- 2) Students should write down as many observations as they can about their rock sample. They should keep in mind that they are writing a description that some one will need to read quickly to determine if they possess their matching rock.

Key features should be written first and in large type such as:

- Crystal or grain size
- Color

- Texture
  - Type of rock if known
  - Reaction with acid
  - Mineral composition
- a. Size and shape of your sample is irrelevant for your description (but will be relevant after you meet your partner). You are trying to match rock types, not broken pieces of rock.
  - b. Participants should be encouraged to do deep observations. They should use magnifying lenses, scratch the minerals to see how hard the sample is, determine if the rock or minerals reacts with acid, etc.
- 3) Pin or tape your rock description on your shirt.
  - 4) When instructed, all participants should walk around reading each other's description.... **no talking** until all matches are made.
  - 5) After all participants have found their respective "rock type" partners, participants can see if their rocks samples actually fit together.
  - 6) The instructor can use this meeting of participants to begin other activities that requires pairing.
    - a. This activity can be used as an "icebreaker" activity.

Example: Icebreaker activity:

Participants may ask their partner a variety of questions (What is your name, where are you from ...). The answers to these questions can be used to introduce each other to the whole class.

b. This activity can also be used to introduce classification schemes and taxonomy.

c. This activity can also be used to show how scientists use observations and descriptions to draw links between others data and interpretations.

Additional Material for discussion:

The German meteorologist, Alfred Wegner is known as the Father of Continental Drift. He proposed his theory that continents move about the globe after reading several articles about fossils and rock types. He was able to see similarities in descriptions to of geologic features across oceans.

See: <http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/wegener.html>