

A Special Place: Rocks and Soils Pre-Visit Activity – What’s the Connection?

What’s the connection?

Objectives: For children to understand that the character of the landscape and its habitats is related to the geological features specific to the area.

Resources: ‘What’s the connection?’ presentation, Teachers’ Notes and activity cards which are best printed out as two slides per page. These can all be found on the [‘Rocks and Soils’](#) page.

Ideally this module should be done after ‘What’s so special about rocks?’ and ‘What’s so special about soils?’ It may be beneficial if they have some understanding of the concept of habitats.

1. Ask the children what type of (wild) animals and/or plants they might see in the local area or in a park. Can they explain why those animals and plants live there? Would they find the same animals and plants in the desert? Why/why not?
2. Look at slide 2 of the presentation. Can they suggest any connection between the rocks and the animals?
3. Slides 3 and 4: Ask the children which image shows the Peak District.
4. Slide 5: You may need to explain that the Peak District can look quite different depending on the location. (In children’s terms, you can explain that it takes around 5 days to walk from the top of the Park to the bottom.)
5. Slides 5 -7: Can the children explain why the Peak has the name ‘Dark’ and ‘White’? (The colours relate to the rock that dominates in that area – Gritstone for ‘Dark’, Limestone for ‘White’.)

6. Slide 8: It is not essential that the children know the animals in the Peak. It is really to prepare them for the fact that not all animals/plants live everywhere.
7. Slide 9 – 12: Referring back to slide 2, can the children suggest any reasons why those animals relate to those rocks? (e.g. Do they nest there? Catch their prey there?)
8. Remind children if they have done the previous two modules that soils can be different – acid and alkaline. Give out the activity cards in groups and explain that they need to read them carefully and put them into two groups – White Peak and Dark Peak. The children should be prepared to explain their criteria. You may want to give them a clue that the rocks, the soil, the plants and the animals are all connected in some way.
9. Review what the children have decided and allow them to justify their choices.
10. Slides 13 to 22 summarises that the animals and plants that live in a specific location are dependent on the soil type which in turn is dependent on the type of rock.

Follow up work: Refer back to point 1 above. Can the children suggest what type of soil or rock they have in the local area? Can they think of way of testing their ideas?