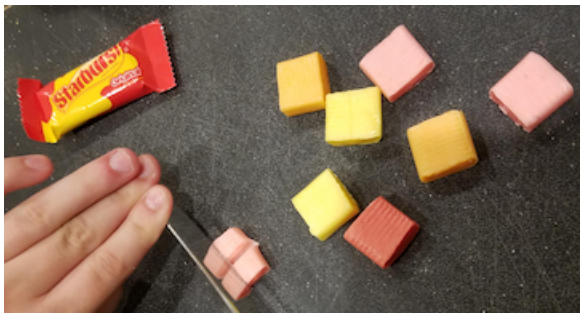
Snack Break – Rock Cycle

The rock cycle is always changing rocks and sediments from one type of rock to another. This can take billions of years, but you can show the whole rock cycle in a few minutes and have a sweet snack at the end!

You will need a few Starburst candies, or something else that is a soft candy. Don't have any candy? You can look at these pictures, but it won't be quite as tasty.

Unwrap 4-6 pieces of candy and put them on something that you can cut on (lie a cutting board or plate).

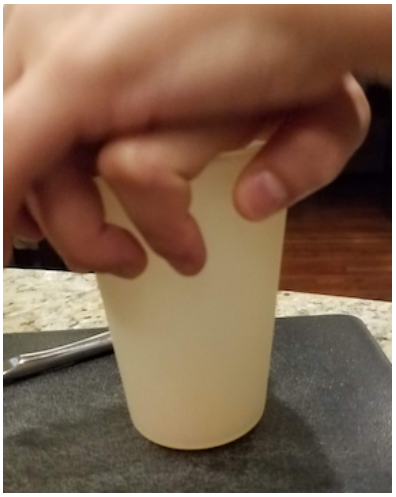


Carefully cut the candy into several smaller pieces. You can do this with a plastic knife, scissors, or even rip them apart. They do not have to be the same size, rocks come in all shapes and sizes!

Now you have "**weathered & eroded**" your rocks into a pile of **sediment**.

You can turn a few pieces of sediment back into a sedimentary rock by squeezing them together in your hand (or you can put them in a baggie).

Look at your sedimentary rock. It is stuck together, but you are able to still see the individual pieces of candy that made your rock. Sedimentary rocks are often not as strong as other types of rocks because the pieces have not been through the heat and pressure that igneous and metamorphic rocks experience.



Now find a plastic cup or mug and push down hard on your rock. This is like what a **metamorphic rock** experiences when being squished between 2 tectonic plates – lots of pressure!

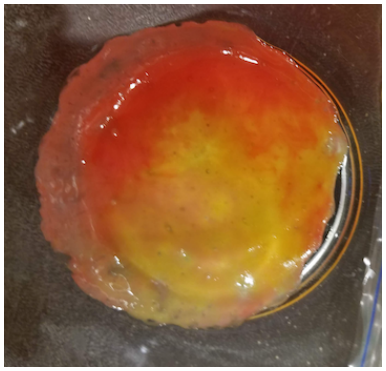
Now it is getting harder to see the individual sediments that make up the rock.

****Note – you will need an adult's help for this part****

You will need:
- a coffee cup or glass bowl that can be put in the microwave

Put a few pieces of the candy in a coffee cup or a glass bowl and microwave it for 20-30 seconds.

Very Hot! Get a hot pad and an adult to get this from the microwave!



Now what do you have? Candy **magma or lava**!

You can pour it or scoop it out onto a piece of foil or the cutting board. When lava cools and becomes hard, what type of rock do you have? **Igneous!**

Now it is impossible to see the original sediments and a new rock is formed.

Remember that rocks can go through the rock cycle in any path – they may always be igneous, just melting and cooling again and again. Or go from igneous to sediment to become sedimentary. No matter what the path is, the rock cycle never ends!

Don't forget to clean up rock cycle activity and maybe eat the leftover sediment!