

## ***Sorting and Classifying Rocks and Minerals - Primary*** v.6/08

### **Goals**

This activity introduces or reinforces sorting and classifying skills for primary students. Using sets of common natural and man-made objects, pairs of students follow different sorting strategies and draw simple conclusions with the help of the teacher.

### **Materials**

plastic leftover containers (used or new)

assortment of rocks, bones, minerals, man made materials

*sandstone, granite, quartz crystals, sticks, bones, asphalt, concrete, marble, slate limestone, shells, coral, small geodes, river stones(smooth), basalt, seaglass*

sorting tray or laminated sorting sheet

### **Procedure**

Divide your class into teams of two or three students each. After handing out the collections and sorting trays, give students their sorting directions:

Sort 1: separate things which have been alive from things which have never been alive

Sort 2: separate rough objects from smooth objects

Sort 3: separate things which you think are lots of ingredients mixed together from those that seem to be made from one pure ingredient

Sort 4: separate objects which are flat or made from layers

Sort 5: separate things which are unusual from the ones that are boring

Sort 6: divide your objects by color

Sort 7: Which rocks or minerals might have come from New Hampshire?

Sort 8: pick one object you like and describe why you like it to your partner

At the end of the exercise, be sure all the objects get back to their bins. You may have to do a bit of sorting if the groups are close to one another! Keep an eye out for missing quartz crystals!