



Everybody Needs A Rock

Author – Byrd Baylor
Created by Carol Ann Bloom/skydog

The author, Byrd Baylor, presents 10 qualities to look for when choosing a rock...”not just any rock, but a special rock that you find yourself and keep it for as long as you can, maybe forever.” After reading this book it will be hard to resist the urge to go on your own rock hunt in whatever environment you call home.

The author gives ten rules for picking your own special rock, using your senses to help: smell, taste, feel and sight. As you follow the author’s advice and search out your own special rock, your connection with nature and appreciation of the environment will be strengthened along the way.

Following the author’s guide for choosing a rock, try writing your own set of rules for choosing a variety of things such as a seashell, a flower, or a favorite tree, animal or insect.

You can also make a list of “10 qualities” to guide other choices in your life. What might be your 10 rules for choosing a good book, a gift for someone, a pet, a club to join, or even a friend?

After reading Everybody Needs A Rock stretch the book with some of these fun rock projects.

1 – Rock Games:

Tic Tac Rock –

Find a flat rock about the size of a saucer.

Collect 5 light colored stones and 5 dark colored stones (about the size of a nickel).

Stretch 2 rubber bands around the large rock from top to bottom.

Stretch 2 more rubber bands from side to side.

The pattern made on the large rock with the 4 rubber bands is your 9 section playing area (like a Tic Tac Toe grid).

The 10 small stones (light and dark colors) are your game pieces.

Play Tic Tac Rock with a friend following the same rules for Tic Tac Toe.

The first player to place 3 stones in a straight line, vertical, horizontal or diagonal, wins the game!

You can also make a Tic Tac Rock game right in the grass.

Find 12 rocks about the size of your fist.

Use a black permanent marker to make a large X on 6 of the rocks.

Use a black permanent marker to make a large O on the other 6 rocks.

Find 8 sticks or branches that are about 12” long.

Find a soft, green grassy spot in your yard or anywhere you happen to be.

Place the sticks on the grass (2 vertical and 2 horizontal) to form the 9 section playing area. If you can only find shorter sticks, place them end to end to make the 4 lines.

Relax in the grass and play with a friend.

Take turns placing the X and O marked rocks inside the 9 squares. The first person to form a straight line is the winner.

Keep your sticks and X/O rocks in a sack to take with you for hikes, picnics, camping, and other outdoor fun.

Rock ‘N Remember –

Kai-awase is a matching game that was first played in Japan centuries ago. It was played with pairs of beautifully decorated seashells.

Use rocks to make your own *Kai-awase* game called Rock ‘N Remember.

Find 14 small flat rocks that are all about the same size, shape, and color.

Separate the rocks into 7 pairs.

Use crayons or markers to draw a different picture or design on each of the 7 pairs, such as 2 flowers, 2 leaves, 2 suns, 2 moons, 2 trees, 2 insects, and 2 butterflies.

Play Rock ‘N Remember by yourself or with a friend.

Before playing, mix up the decorated pairs of rocks and place them face down.

Take turns flipping over 2 rocks at a time. If the 2 rocks match (2 rocks with the same picture), keep both rocks. If they do not match, place both rocks face down again and the next player takes a turn. Keep playing until all the rocks are matched.

The player with the most pairs is the winner!

Make the game more difficult by decorating more than 7 pairs of rocks.

2 – Rock Door Stopper

What better way to conserve energy and electricity than by turning off electric fans and air conditioners and opening the doors during hot weather?

To keep doors from blowing closed when those fresh breezes cool your home, set a Rock Door Stopper against the open door.

Find a large oval rock (a little smaller than a football) that reminds you of a fish shape.

Stretch an adult size athletic sock (any color but white) over the rock. This is also a great way to recycle a sock without a mate! Bunch the excess end of the sock together and use a rubber band or a piece of string to fasten it tightly. This will be the fish tail.

Position the rock on its side with the “tail” on one end.

Cut several ovals and triangles from 2 or 3 colors of felt or craft foam. Use glue to attach the shapes on both sides of the sock-covered rock. Attach the ovals as the spots on a fish and the triangles as the fins. Glue triangles on the top of the rock as fins and decorate both sides of the tail.

Cut 2 black circles and 2 smaller white circles. Glue the white circles on top of the black circles and attach one on each side of the rock fish for eyes.

Set your Rock Door Stopper in front of any open door and start conserving energy while you stay cool!

3 – **Reminder Rocks**

Find several small smooth rocks.

Use a thin tip permanent black marker to write one to three words on one side of the rocks.

Choose words that will help you remember something special about Earth care or remind you of an Earth care goal you want to achieve. You might choose:

Love the Earth, Care for Earth, One Earth, Plant A Tree, Don't Waste, Don't Litter, Earth Friend, Go Green, Conserve, Protect, Reuse, or Recycle.

You can also write words on the rocks that are qualities you admire in people and want to strive for yourself or words to help you grow. You might choose:

Smile, Learn, Explore, Discover, Courage, Health, Honesty, Love, Peace, Kindness, Compassion, Fairness, or Friendship.

Set your Reminder Rocks in places where you will look at them often and always be reminded of your special thoughts and words: on a desk, dresser, windowsill, bedside table, computer area, book shelf, or bathroom/kitchen sink.

You might want to carry one or two in your pocket, bag, or backpack.

Reminder Rocks also make great gifts.

Make a few with special words for your friends and family.

Everyone needs a reminder sometimes!

4 – **Wear A Rock**

Search for a rock or stone you like very much. The rock should be small, about the size of a dime, nickel or quarter.

Use scissors to cut two 6" pieces of thin wire. Lay one piece of wire on top of the other, forming an X. Twist the two pieces of wire together at the center of the X.

Place your special rock on the center of the X where the wires are twisted together.

Bring the four pieces of wire up the sides of the rock. Twist the four pieces of wire together at the top of the rock. Twist tightly to hold the rock firmly in the wire cage.

After twisting the 4 ends together, bend the twisted piece around a pencil or stick to make a loop. Cut off the excess wire.

Place a piece of cord or ribbon through the wire loop. Tie the two ends of the cord or ribbon together so it will fit over your head. Cut off the excess cord.

Wear your Rock proudly!

5 – **Rock Treasure Box**

Collect a handful of pebbles and one small rock about the size of a quarter.

Cover a small box and matching lid with paper. A cardboard jewelry box works well and is a great way to recycle something you might be throwing away.

Trace around the bottom, sides, and top of the box and the lid. Cut out each section and attach the cut paper to the box and lid with glue.

Glue pebbles on the corners of the lid or around the four edges of the lid.

Glue the small rock in the center of the box lid as a knob.

Use the rock knob to lift the lid off the box.

Keep special small treasures in your Rock Treasure Box such as marbles, seashells, coins, postage stamps, jewelry, or maybe.....favorite stones and rocks!

6 – **Rock Paper Weight**

Find a smooth rock about the size of your fist.

Collect a handful of light and dark colored pebbles.

Decide which side of the rock is flatter. Use it as the bottom of the paperweight.

Use a black felt tip marker to draw a shape (star, heart, moon, leaf, flower, tree) or the outline of an animal on the top of the rock.

Place a line of white glue (or tacky glue) on the marker line. Attach the dark pebbles on the line of glue. Spread glue inside the shape and place the light colored pebbles on the glue to fill in the middle of the design.

When the glue dries, set your Rock Paperweight on your desk or book shelf.

7 – **Pet Rock**

Search for a rock that is so special you might, as author Byrd Baylor says, “**keep it for as long as you can, maybe forever**”.

It can be any size, shape, and color you choose.

Decorate the rock anyway you like: permanent markers, acrylic paints, or even ordinary crayons.

If you choose to use crayons, press hard with the crayon to put as much color on the rock as possible. When you finish using each color, rub over the crayon on the rock with a cloth or paper towel to remove excess wax and shine the color.

No matter how you choose to color your rock, use black first to make stripes, spots, scales, or square shapes (like a turtle shell) on the top of the rock.

Use other colors to fill in the stripes, spots, scales, or squares.

Glue 2 wiggly eyes on the front of the rock.

You can also attach feathers, pebbles, seeds, or twigs to the rock with glue.

Think of a good name for your Pet Rock.

Keep your Pet Rock on a shelf, desk or with a rock collection.

If you like, use small sticks and twigs to make a cage for your Pet Rock.

8 – **Rock Fossils**

Make a batch of dough using the recipe below.

Place a 1” ball of dough on a table and flatten the ball with the palm of your hand to make a circle or oval shape.

Dip your finger in water and rub the top of the dough to make it smooth.

Make fossil imprints by pressing objects you find outdoors into the dough.

Press the most textured side of the object into the dough and lift straight up to remove it.

Try a piece of bark, a flower, a petal, a leaf, a seashell, a rock, twigs, pebbles, or seeds.

Allow the fossil to air dry in a warm spot for several hours.

Seal, protect, and shine your fossils with a glue glaze.

Mix an equal amount of white glue and water to make a glue glaze. Brush the glaze on one side of the fossils, let dry, and brush the glaze on the other side and edges.

Set your finished Rock Fossils on a shelf, desk, table, windowsill, or with a rock collection.

You can also bury Rock Fossils in the sand or soil and have a Fossil Hunt with your friends. Dig up the Rock Fossils like an archeologist!

Dough Recipe –

Combine 2 cups of flour and 1 cup of salt in a large bowl and stir.

Add 1 cup of water and mix thoroughly with your hands

Form the mixture into a ball and place it on a flat surface.

Knead the dough with your hands until it is smooth.

The more you knead, the smoother the dough.

9 – Rock Collection

Recycle an egg carton to make your own Rock Collection.

Cut a piece of paper to cover the top of the egg carton. Decorate the paper any way you choose and write the words *My Rock Collection*.

Glue the paper on the top of the egg carton.

Cut 12 small slips of paper about 1” x 2”.

When you find rocks you want to add to your collection, make labels for them

Write something on one of the slips of paper to identify each rock: the kind of rock (if you know or can find out), where you found the rock, and the date you found the rock.

Place the rock in one of the 12 sections of the egg carton.

Glue the identification label above the cup.

When you fill all 12 sections in the carton, make another collection box for more rocks.

Go on your own Rock Hunts to find interesting and unique rocks for your collection.

When you travel to different places, try to find at least one special rock to add to your collection when you return home.

Ask friends and relatives to find rocks for you on their travels.

10 – Rock Inuksuk

An *inuksuk* (Ee-nook-sook) is a pile of rocks and stones arranged to look like a person.

Author Mary Wallace who wrote a book titled “The Inuksuk Book” writes,

“An inuksuk is a timeless symbol of our close connection with the Earth.”

The Inuit people of the Canadian Arctic used inuksuit (the plural of inuksuk) to mark trails, indicate direction, show where food is stored, mark good fishing or hunting spots and show places to rest.

Every inuksuk is as unique as the person who makes it.

Collect a pile of rocks and stones the size of your hand or smaller.

Choose all shapes and colors, but make sure at least half of the rocks are flat.

Find a place in your yard or garden to make your inuksuk.

Use the largest and flattest rock as the bottom.

Begin by balancing rocks on the two ends of the flat rock. Use a single rock or try making piles of smaller rocks. These are the “leg rocks”, like the legs of a person.

Place a larger flat rock across the leg rocks.

Continue adding and balancing rocks to make the body, arms, neck, and head.

You can make an inuksuk to keep indoors by using smaller rocks and following the same directions. When you have made a balanced inuksuk you like, use thick white glue to attach the rocks together.

Set your inuksuk on the floor or on a desk, bookshelf, or windowsill.

Your local park or school may be willing to allow you to build an inuksuk for everyone to enjoy. Ask your friends to help you gather larger rocks to build the inuksuk.

You can enjoy your inuksuk for a very long time and think of it as your own special connection to the Earth.

Mary Wallace writes, “A stone is a piece of the Earth itself, formed by ancient and mysterious forces long before our time”.