Name: _____ Date: _____

Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

Circle group

Rain tastes fresh. Most river water does too. So why is the sea salty? It starts on land.

Rain falls on rocks. It wears tiny bits out of the stone. Some bits are salt. Rain and rivers carry them downhill. Rivers flow into the sea.

A river has only a little salt. You cannot taste it. But rivers never stop. Year after year, more salt goes to the sea.

The sun warms the sea. Water rises into the air as vapor. The salt stays behind. Later, the vapor makes clouds and falls as rain.

The salt stays in the sea. So the sea is salty, but the rain is not.

Questions

1. Where does the story of the salty sea start?

_____

_____

2. What do rivers carry to the sea?

_____

_____

3. Why can you not taste salt in a river?

_____

_____

4. What happens to the salt when sea water rises as vapor?

_____

_____

5. Why does the sea get saltier over time?

_____

_____

6. Why is rain not salty, even though it comes from the sea?

_____

Words to know

vapor: water that has turned into a gas in the air

fresh: not salty

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

Triangle group

Rain water tastes fresh, and so does most river water. So why is the ocean salty? The answer starts on land.

Rain falls on rocks. It is a little acidic, so it slowly wears tiny bits out of the stone. Some of those bits are salts. Rain water and rivers carry them downhill, and the rivers flow into the sea.

The amount of salt in a river is very small, so you cannot taste it. But the river never stops pouring in. Year after year, more salt reaches the ocean.

When the sun warms the sea, water rises into the air as vapor. The vapor leaves the salt behind. Later it makes clouds and falls again as rain. The salt stays in the ocean, and it builds up over a very long time.

That is why the sea is salty, but the rain is not.

Questions

1. Where does the story of the salty sea begin?

_____

_____

2. What do rivers carry to the sea?

_____

_____

3. Why can you not taste salt in river water?

_____

_____

4. What happens to the salt when sea water rises as vapor?

_____

_____

5. Why does the ocean get saltier over a long time?

_____

_____

6. Why is rain not salty even though it comes from the sea?

_____

_____

Words to know

acidic: having a sour, slightly sharp quality that can wear away stone
salts: tiny bits of minerals that can dissolve in water
vapor: water that has turned into a gas in the air
fresh: not salty
builds up: slowly gathers and grows in amount

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

Square group

Rain water tastes fresh, and so does the water in most rivers. Why, then, is the ocean salty? The explanation begins on dry land.

When rain falls on rocks, it is slightly acidic, so it gradually wears tiny fragments out of the stone. Some of those fragments are salts. Rain water and rivers carry them downhill, and eventually the rivers empty into the sea.

The amount of salt in any single river is so small that you cannot taste it. However, rivers never stop flowing, and year after year more salt arrives in the ocean.

When the sun warms the sea, water rises into the air as vapor, and the vapor leaves the salt behind. Later it forms clouds and falls again as rain. The salt remains in the ocean, where it has been building up over an extremely long time.

That explains why the sea is salty although the rain is not.

Questions

1. Where does the explanation for the salty sea begin?

_____

_____

2. What do the rivers carry down to the sea?

_____

_____

3. Why can nobody taste the salt in a river?

_____

_____

4. What happens to the salt when sea water rises as vapor?

_____

_____

5. Why does the ocean become saltier over a long time?

_____

_____

6. Why is rain fresh even though it begins as sea water?

_____

_____

Words to know

acidic: having a sour, slightly sharp quality that can wear away stone
salts: tiny bits of minerals that can dissolve in water
vapor: water that has turned into a gas in the air
fresh: not salty

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

Easier · 110 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1

1. On land, where rain falls on rocks.
2. Tiny bits of rock, including salt.
3. A river has only a little salt.
4. The salt stays behind in the sea.
5. Rivers keep bringing salt, and the salt does not rise with the vapor.
6. The vapor leaves the salt behind.

Triangle: Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

This passage · 145 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.2

1. On land, with rain falling on rocks.
2. Tiny bits of rock, including salts.
3. The amount of salt in a river is very small.
4. The salt is left behind in the ocean.
5. Rivers keep bringing in salt, and the salt does not leave with the vapor.
6. The vapor leaves the salt behind when it rises.

Square: Salt Hiding in Rocks: Why the Sea Is Salty

Harder · 153 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.7

1. On dry land, when rain falls on rocks.
2. Tiny fragments of rock, including salts.
3. The amount of salt in a single river is very small.
4. The vapor leaves the salt behind in the ocean.
5. Rivers keep adding salt, and none of it leaves with the vapor.
6. The salt is left behind when the water turns to vapor.