Review the following vocabulary with the class:

COMPOSITION — of what something is made.

MINERALOLOGIST — a scientist who studies minerals.

MINERAL — a naturally occurring material with specific chemical and physical characteristics.

Read *Dave’s Down-to-Earth Rock Shop* to students. While reading it, discuss the different ways in which Dave organized his rocks (composition, size, color).

If students would like to start collecting and categorizing their own rocks, hand out the *Rock Collection sheet* so that they may work on it at home. Go over the information on Friedrich Mohs, as well as how he determined a rock’s hardness. (See Rock Collection sheet for details.)

Friedrich Mohs was an Austrian mineralogist. In 1812, Mohs devised a scale of measuring hardness, or the resistance to scratches or abrasions, of minerals. He devised his scale with a range from 1 to 10, with 10 being the hardest.
Rock Collection

Collect rocks from around your home or school.
Organize the rocks according to size.
Organize the rocks according to color.
Organize the rocks according to hardness, using the scale below to help you.

Mohs’ Scale of Mineral Hardness

1 to 2 - mineral can be scratched by a fingernail (example: Talc and Gypsum)
3 to 4 - mineral can be scratched by a penny (example: Calcite)
5 to 6 - mineral can be scratched by a nail (example: Apatite or Orthodose)

What other ways can you organize the rocks that you have collected? Below, please explain how you organized them:

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