

Boxcar Tommy and the Williker Boys

by ReadWorks

Boxcar Tommy is an orphan who lives in a train car on the outskirts of town. Nobody pays him much mind. His only friend is Pepper the poodle.

Until last week, that is. That's when things changed.

Last week, Tommy won the town's annual Soapbox Derby race on Main Street. The triplets had raced with expensive cars they bought from a catalog, while Boxcar Tommy had used a flat junker he made out of wood and junk that Pepper had gathered. But in the end, the sun reflected off the triplets' cars, shiny with cherry-red paint, and right into their eyes. The triplets crashed their racecars and Tommy won the Derby by a landslide.

Today, Tommy decides to pick up a free sandwich from Mrs. Wilson at the General Store. But this afternoon is different from all the others. Mrs. Wilson surprises Tommy by asking if he wants to work at the store.

"If you like, you can help us put away the pickles and the candy," Mrs. Wilson says. "In exchange, I'll give you five dollars a day. Of course, you still have to do your homework!"

Tommy promises that he'll get all his school work done before he comes to help out at the store. He's thrilled at the idea of a job, especially one where he gets to spend time with Mrs. Wilson, who has been so kind to him. After sorting pickles toward the front of the store, Tommy goes to the back room to begin sorting more pickles.

An hour later, there is a commotion up front. Tommy hears Mrs. Wilson sounding upset.

"No, please stop! Put those down," she cries. Tommy runs out to see what's going on.

It's worse than he expected. The Williker triplets are throwing half-sour pickles around the store! They're juggling with the dill pickles that Tommy just put away.

"Hey, boys!" Tommy says sternly. "This is not your store or your merchandise. You're being disrespectful. Please apologize and help us put everything back in its place."

"Well, look who it is," says Billy Williker. "The CHEATER."

"I'm no cheater," Tommy says. "I'm always honest, and I always will be."

"We know you cheated because our cars were better than yours," says Billy. "There's no way you could have won fairly."

At this, Mrs. Wilson comes out from behind the counter and says, "You boys better leave now before I call your father."

Billy Williker nods and tosses a fresh dill pickle up and down. "Go ahead and call our father," he says. "He's too busy to care about us."

As he says this, Billy throws the pickle right at Tommy's cheek. It grazes the side of his face, nearly hitting him in the eye.

Tommy puts his hand up to his eye. The triplets laugh in unison.

"That hurt," Tommy says. "I don't know what I ever did to deserve your anger."

Mrs. Wilson runs to the phone. "I'm calling your father right now," she says.

"No, wait," Tommy says, wiping the pickle juice from his face. He turns toward the triplets. "I'd like for you boys to work here with me, at the store."

"What are you talking about?" asks Mrs. Wilson. "One of them just threw a pickle at your head!"

"Uh, yeah. What ARE you talking about?" Billy asks. "Our father is rich. We don't need to work!"

"I think that might be part of the problem," Tommy says. "You get everything you want: every toy and every game. But you still don't have the attention of your father."

The three boys, who had been grinning naughtily, all look down at their shoes. Billy shrugs his shoulders. Boxcar Tommy is right.

"It's true," continues Tommy. "And I think you boys are probably lonely and bored. Come on, I get five dollars a day. I'll keep two and give each of you one dollar if you'll come work with me."

One by one, the triplets slowly approach Tommy and shake his hand.

"Thanks for winning the race, Tommy," Billy mumbles.

Now Tommy is the one who's confused. "I'm sorry...what did you say?"

"Thank you for daring to compete against us. Most people in this town are afraid of us. We never have anyone to play with, let alone to compete against during the Derby, because we make people nervous. No one ever challenges us. We don't have any friends but each other."

"I'll challenge you kids," says Mrs. Wilson. "Pick up the pickles you threw on my floor before I lose my temper! Step to it!"

The boys all grab brooms and mops, and they begin cleaning together.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does Mrs. Wilson ask Tommy if he wants to do?

2. What is the main conflict in the story?

3. Read these sentences from the story.

"Billy Williker nods and tosses a fresh dill pickle up and down. 'Go ahead and call our father,' he says. 'He's too busy to care about us.'"

Based on this evidence, what conclusion can you make about the Willikers' father?

4. Why do the Williker brothers clean up the mess they've caused by the end of the story?

5. What is this story mostly about?

6. Read the sentences and answer the question.

"An hour later, there is a commotion up front. Tommy hears Mrs. Wilson sounding upset. 'No, please stop! Put those down,' she cries. Tommy runs out to see what's going on.

"It's worse than he expected. The Williker triplets are throwing half-sour pickles around the store! They're juggling with the dill pickles that Tommy just put away."

What does the word "commotion" mean as used in this text?

7. What word or phrase best completes the sentence?

People usually don't challenge the Williker brothers because they are afraid of them.
_____, Boxcar Tommy does challenge them.

8. Tommy tells the Williker triplets that they get every toy and game that they want. What don't the Williker boys have?

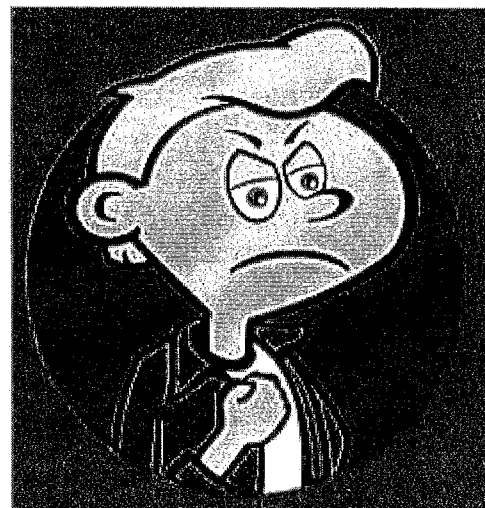
9. Why does Billy thank Tommy for daring to compete against the triplets in the race?

10. The Williker triplets were misbehaving and acting out by throwing pickles around the store. Why were the Williker triplets doing this? Support your answer using evidence from the text.

Do You Bully?

This text is provided courtesy of PACER Center* (www.pacer.org).

Think the person bullying is the big, tough kid on the playground who pushes everyone around? Could be, but it can also be the cheerleader, the student council member, or the quiet kid. A lot of times, people think that appearance defines someone who bullies, but you can't tell who bullies just by looking at them. Students who bully can be any size, age, gender or grade.

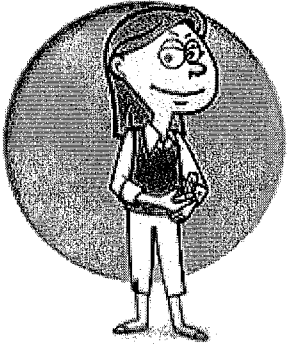


Then what does define someone who bullies?

The answer: It's his or her BEHAVIOR. It's bullying when someone uses words or action to hurt or harm someone else and that person has a hard time defending himself or herself.

Sometimes kids who bully might think that it's cool, fun or just "no big deal," but think about it - what is cool or fun about hurting someone? Name calling, tripping someone, laughing at the person, leaving the person out, ignoring him or her on purpose-how can hurting someone possibly be "no big deal"?

If kids think about why they are bullying, they can then deal with those reasons and change their behavior. You want cool? Now that's cool.



Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What defines someone who bullies?

- A. his or her age
- B. his or her size
- C. his or her appearance
- D. his or her behavior

2. What does the author define and describe in this article?

- A. friendship
- B. studying
- C. bullying
- D. cooperation

3. Imagine that someone keeps calling you "a nerd." You ask the person to stop, but he or she ignores you. Based on the evidence in the text, what can you conclude about that person?

- A. That person is a bully.
- B. That person is not a bully.
- C. That person knows how to defend himself or herself.
- D. That person does not know how to defend himself or herself.

4. Imagine that someone has called you "a nerd." You ask the person to stop and explain your feelings have been hurt. He or she apologizes and never calls you a nerd again. Based on the evidence in the text, what can you conclude about that person?

- A. That person is a bully.
- B. That person is not a bully.
- C. That person knows how to defend himself or herself.
- D. That person does not know how to defend himself or herself.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. Students who bully can be big and tough.
- B. Cheerleaders, student council members, and quiet kids can be bullies.
- C. Bullying is defined by behavior, not appearance.
- D. Kids who bully might think that bullying is cool or fun.

6. The title of this text is "Do You Bully?" Why might the author have written the title as a question?

- A. to encourage readers to pay more attention to their appearance
- B. to encourage readers to tell an adult if they are bullied
- C. to make readers think about whether they bully others
- D. to make readers feel bad about bullying others

7. Read these sentences from the text.

"Think the person bullying is the big, tough kid on the playground who pushes everyone around? Could be, but it can also be the cheerleader, the student council member, or the quiet kid."

How could the first sentence be expanded without changing its meaning?

- A. When do you think the person bullying is the big, tough kid on the playground who pushes everyone around?
- B. Do you think the person bullying is the big, tough kid on the playground who pushes everyone around?
- C. Why do you think the person bullying is the big, tough kid on the playground who pushes everyone around?
- D. Why would you think the person bullying is the big, tough kid on the playground who pushes everyone around?

8. According to the text, what might kids who bully think about bullying?

Include three pieces of information from the text in your answer.

9. Explain whether the author thinks bullying is "no big deal."

Support your answer with evidence from the text.

10. Why might the author have written this article?

Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Writing Directions

Imagine that someone has asked you for the directions to make your favorite sandwich. Help them by writing the steps. Use at least six time-order words. Examples are given in the word bank.

eventually
finally
first

last
next
now

shortly after
soon
then

How to Make My Favorite _____ Sandwich

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or printed text on the paper.

Allow five minutes for both you and your child to write a paragraph about how to tie a shoe or do some other simple everyday task. Read each paragraph aloud and have the listener try to follow the directions. Which set of directions was more precise?

Converting Measurements

1 liter (L) = 1,000 milliliters (mL)

Find the missing numbers.

1. 8 L = _____ mL
2. 5,000 mL = _____ L
3. 15 L = _____ mL
4. 48,000 mL = _____ L
5. 4 L = _____ mL
6. 33,000 mL = _____ L
7. 92 L = _____ mL
8. 21 L = _____ mL
9. 7,000 mL = _____ L
10. 6 L = _____ mL
11. 8,000 mL = _____ L
12. 27 L = _____ mL

Answer each question.

13. William measures 18,000 milliliters of milk. How many liters does he measure?
14. Kim drinks $\frac{1}{2}$ of a liter of soda. How many milliliters does she drink?
15. Mark pours 14 liters of juice at the party. How many milliliters of juice does he pour?
16. Isabelle buys 15 2-liter bottles of soda for the party. Her guests drink 18,000 milliliters. How many liters of soda does Isabelle have left over? How many 2-liter bottles does she have left over?



Ask your child to write a conversion chart for inches, feet, yards, and miles. Ask your child to do several conversions. How many feet are in the miles between your home and your child's school? What is your child's height in inches?

Word problems



Write the answer in the box.

A child is given four dimes. How much money does she have altogether?

Write the answer in the box.

A box contains 6 eggs. How many boxes would I need to buy to have 18 eggs?

A boy is given three bags of candy. There are 20 pieces in each bag. How many pieces of candy does the boy have in total?



Four lifeboats carry a total of 100 people. How many people are in each boat?

A shepherd had 200 sheep but 70 were lost in a snowstorm. How many sheep does the shepherd have left?



Three women win the lottery and share \$900 equally among themselves. How much does each woman receive?

A truck contains 50 barrels of oil. It delivers 27 barrels to one garage. How many barrels are left on the truck?



Andrej has a collection of 150 baseball cards. He sells 30 of them to a friend. How many cards does he have left?

When Peter multiplies his apartment number by 3, the result is 75. What is his apartment number?

One photograph costs \$1.80. How much will two photographs cost?

A dog buries 20 bones on Monday, 30 bones on Tuesday, and 40 bones on Wednesday. How many bones has the dog buried altogether?



A car trip is supposed to be 70 miles long but the car breaks down half-way. How far has the car gone when it breaks down?

A teacher has 32 children in her class. 13 children are out with the flu. How many children are left in class?

0

6

1

3

5

4

2

5

6

7

Name _____

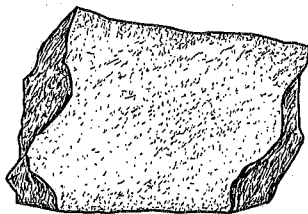
**Day
1**

Weekly Question

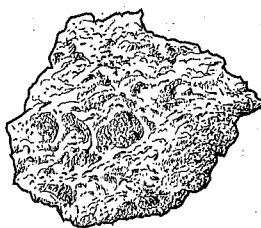
Where do rocks come from?

Scientists divide rocks into three types according to how the rocks are formed. Rock that forms when hot, liquid rock cools and hardens is called **igneous** rock. The properties of an igneous rock are determined by how fast the molten rock cools.

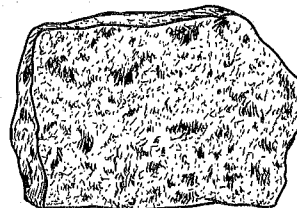
When igneous rock cools slowly under the ground, the minerals in the rock have time to form large, visible crystals. Granite is an example of this kind of igneous rock. In contrast, basalt (buh-SALT) and pumice (PUH-miss) are igneous rocks that form from lava flowing from a volcano. Mineral crystals in these rocks are often too small to see without a strong microscope. These rocks cool above ground and harden quickly. Pumice is very light and airy, while basalt is much denser.



basalt



pumice



granite

Use information from the passage to complete the sentences.

1. When lava cools, it forms _____ rock.
2. The size of igneous rock _____ depends on how quickly the rock cools.
3. An igneous rock that is so light it can float on water is _____.
4. An igneous rock that forms large crystals is _____.
5. Without a _____, it can be difficult to see the crystals in basalt.

Daily Science

**Big
Idea 4**



WEEK 2

Vocabulary

igneous

IG-nee-us

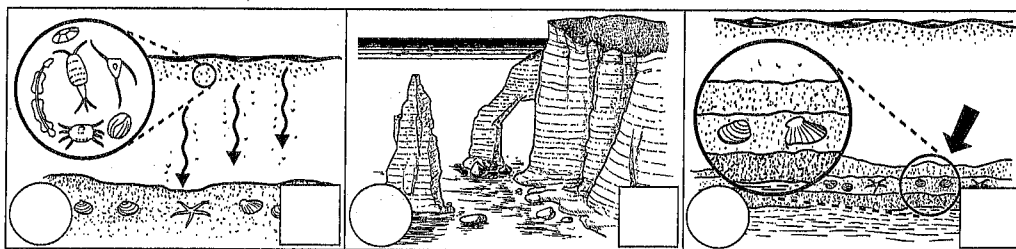
a type of rock
that forms when
molten rock
cools

**Day
2****Weekly Question****Where do rocks come from?**

Sedimentary rock is a kind of rock created from **sediment**, which can come from several sources. For instance, the weathering and erosion of larger rocks can create sediment made of smaller rocks and sand. Over time, heat and pressure can cause sediment to **cement** together and form solid rock. Shale is a sedimentary rock formed from mud.

Other kinds of sediment are created in the ocean from the shells of tiny organisms that settle on the seafloor. As layers of sediment pile up, the weight of the sediment squeezes water out of the spaces between the shells. Heat, pressure, and time work to cement the bits of shell into rock. Limestone is a sedimentary rock formed this way.

In the circles, number the pictures to show the order in which sedimentary rock can be formed. In each box, write the letter of the caption that goes with the picture.



- Buried sediment, affected by heat and pressure, forms rock.
- Sedimentary rock can be exposed by uplift caused by earthquakes.
- Sediment from microscopic shells builds up on the seafloor.

Talk

How is it possible that limestone deposits containing a lot of shells can be found many miles from a body of water?

Vocabulary**cement**

suh-MENT
to glue together
and become solid

sediment

SED-uh-ment
a naturally-occurring
deposit of small
rocks, sand, or the
remains of plants
and animals

sedimentary

SED-uh-MEN-tuh-ree
formed from
sediment

Name _____

**Day
3**

Weekly Question

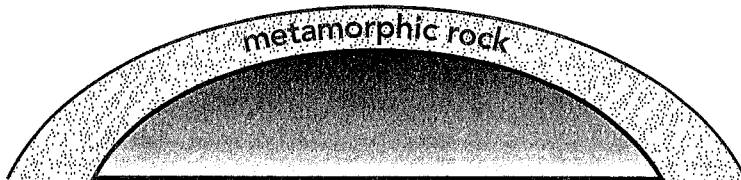
Where do rocks come from?

Great heat and pressure, such as the kind that occurs deep within Earth, can cause rocks to change. Rock that changes this way is called **metamorphic** rock. With enough heat, pressure, and time, both igneous and sedimentary rocks can be transformed into metamorphic rocks.

Metamorphic rocks tend to be harder than other kinds of rocks. They are often striped or show a swirled pattern. Where does this pattern come from? When a rock is heated, different-colored parts of the rock can start to melt, like chocolate chips do when cookies are baked. If the rock is then squeezed by pressure, the soft, melted parts can flow. This is what gives the rock stripes or swirls. Marble, which is formed from limestone, is a kind of metamorphic rock. Slate, which is formed from shale, is another kind.

- A. This diagram shows how metamorphic rock forms. Draw arrows and label them to show where the *heat* and *pressure* come from.

Earth's surface



molten rock

- B. Use information from the passage to complete the sentences.

- _____ and _____ can transform one kind of rock into another over a long period of time.
- Marble is an example of _____ rock.
- Stripes in metamorphic rock form when parts of the rock _____.

Daily Science

**Big
Idea 4**



WEEK 2

Vocabulary

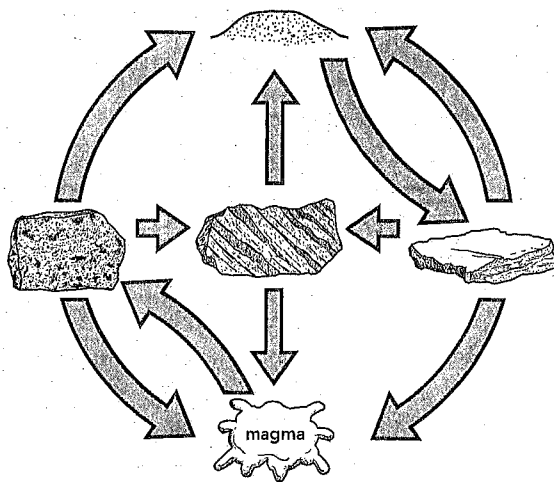
metamorphic

MET-uh-MOR-fik
a type of rock
that has been
physically
changed by heat
or pressure

**Day
4****Weekly Question****Where do rocks come from?**

Rocks are constantly changed by processes on and within Earth. Weathering and erosion break down rocks into sediment. Heat and pressure in Earth's crust change rocks into new kinds. In addition, the movement of Earth's plates allows rocks in the crust to sink back into the mantle and melt. Magma from the mantle can then rise through cracks in the crust and form new rocks. This natural process of creation, destruction, and recycling of rock material between the mantle and Earth's surface is called the **rock cycle**.

Use the diagram of the rock cycle to complete the sentences below.



1. Heat and pressure turn igneous rock or sedimentary rock into _____ rock.
2. Magma cools to become _____.
3. Weathering and erosion turn rock into _____.
4. Cementing results in _____ rock.
5. When rocks melt, they become _____.

Vocabulary**rock cycle**

rock SY-kul
natural process
of creation,
destruction, and
recycling of rocks
in Earth's crust and
upper mantle

Name _____

**Day
5**

Weekly Question

Where do rocks come from?



A. Use the words in the box to complete the sentences.

igneous cement sedimentary
sediment rock cycle metamorphic

1. When lava or magma cools, it forms _____ rocks.
2. All rocks are created, changed, or destroyed in the _____.
3. _____ rocks are formed when other rocks are weathered or eroded and leave behind _____.
4. Pressure causes sediment to _____ and form a hard rock.
5. A _____ rock forms when another rock is subjected to a lot of heat and pressure.

B. Name one trait of each type of rock and describe how the rock is formed.

1. Igneous: _____
2. Metamorphic: _____
3. Sedimentary: _____

C. Add the missing words to complete three parts of the rock cycle.

1. Igneous rock + _____ and _____ = sedimentary rock
2. Sedimentary rock + _____ and _____ = metamorphic rock
3. Magma + _____ = igneous rock

