

Classroom Activity

10 Big Question: How does the earth work?

Make an erupting volcano

The classroom staple never loses its thrill! A great activity for younger students, it can be made as simply or as complex as you wish. Aside from the fun of the eruption, this activity can be used to better understand the parts of a volcano, how volcanoes are formed and why they erupt.

You will need:

- An empty soft drink bottle
- Modelling clay, papier mache or plaster
- Plant material, dirt, twigs
- Vinegar, ½ cup
- Water, ½ cup
- Liquid dishwashing soap (optional)
- Baking Soda, 3-4 tablespoons
- Red food colouring
- Large tray or plastic tablecloth

Create a model volcano around the bottle using the material of choice. Make sure that the opening to the bottle is clear of clay or plaster, and that no clay drops into the bottle. Decorate the model to make it look authentic using the plant material, dirt, and twigs. Label the different parts of the volcano: crater, magma chamber, crust, vent, side vent, lava, etc. Place your model into the large tray or onto a table covered with the plastic tablecloth.

To make your volcano erupt, mix the water, baking soda, and liquid dishwashing soap. Pour the mixture into the top of the bottle. Add a few drops of red food colouring to the vinegar in a separate cup. Pour the vinegar into the lava chamber and watch the volcano erupt. Make sure that you do this somewhere that you don't mind a bit of mess!