



High Weald Hero Activity Card Sandstone Exploration



Location: Sandstone outcrop, preferably two different ones

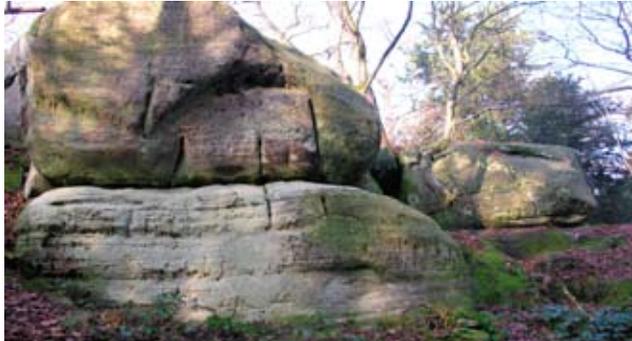
Equipment: Sandrock in the Weald leaflet (or other identification sheet), pencil, paper

Time: 20-30minutes

Audience: KS2

An opportunity to examine and learn about sandstone outcrops, one of the High Weald's unique features

Activity Description: In this activity the group are explorers and can work alone or in pairs. Their challenge is to count all the different plants that they see growing on the sandstone. They will need to look closely to see the differences between mosses, liverworts, lichen and ferns; there may also be some trees and other larger plants. Children should also describe the surrounding area, i.e. is it wooded, open, wet, dark or light?



Questions to prompt discussion:

- Are the plants different or the same as those not living on the rocks?
- How do the plants stay on the rocks?
- Can you see any roots? If so, where do they go?
- What conditions do the plants that live on the rocks like to grow in?
- How do the plants get food to grow bigger? (The surface of the rock has nutrients left in it from the rain after it has evaporated).

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Look at where the surface has been rubbed off, either naturally or by people. Compare the number of plants found on this damaged surface to the areas where the surface is intact.

Sketch and label different parts of the rocks; looking closely at the finer detail, patterns and plants that are present.

Some outcrops are named based on their shape e.g. Toad Rock. Can the children find different shapes in their outcrops and come up with imaginative names?



High Weald Teaching Point: There are only four areas of lowland sandstone left in Europe. These are in France, Luxembourg, the Czech Republic and England. The rocks have been present for thousands of years so it is important to protect the last remaining sandstone areas, like those in the High Weald, and the rare species of plants that are found growing on them.

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