

# YEAR 4 - Rocks and Soils

## Key Vocabulary for the topic.

Earth's crust	The outermost layer of the earth made up of solid rocks and minerals
Igneous	Comes from the Latin word 'ignis' which means fire. It describes rocks that have formed by the cooling and hardening of molten lava or magma
Metamorphic	Comes from Greek words <b>meaning</b> "change of shape." These rocks are formed when other rocks are affected by great temperatures and pressures and so form new rock.
Sedimentary	These rocks are made when sand, mud and pebbles get laid down in layers. Over time, these layers are squashed under more and more layers.
Magma	Molten, or hot liquefied, rock located deep below the Earth's surface
Solidify	To make or become solid e.g. when melted wax is cooled
Erosion	The wearing away of the land
Compression	A force that squeezes something together
Organisms	Any living thing that usually have 5 basic needs: air, water, nutrients, energy and a place to live
Particles	Tiny bits of matter that make up everything in the universe.
Decay	The breaking down of materials; put simply it means rot
Absorb	To 'take in' or 'soak up'
Humus	The dark rich part of earth formed from decaying plant or animal material

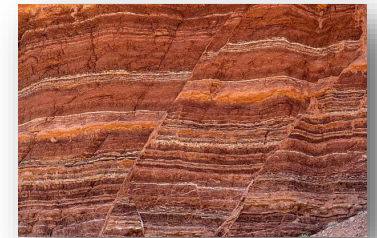
The Earth's crust is made of rocks, although much of it is covered by water or soil. There are 3 main types of rock:

**Igneous rock** - these come from molten magma from below the Earth's crust and reaches the surface through volcanic eruptions. When this cools and solidifies, this can leave the rock looking smooth and shiny.

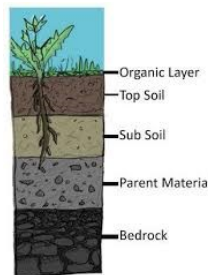


**Metamorphic rock** - these are formed deep underground. The high temperatures and pressure causes these rocks to *compress* and change into new rock.

**Sedimentary rock** - these rocks are created when layers of sand and soil from erosion collect in rivers and seabeds. Over time they are compressed and so form new rock.

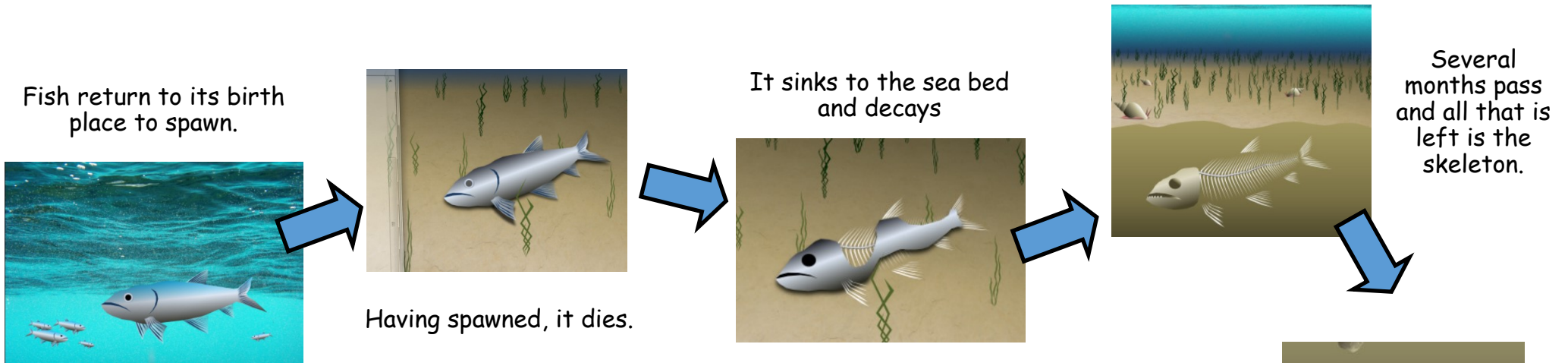


**Fossils** are formed when dead organisms are trapped within these layers. (see reverse for more details)



**Soil** forms when rocks are broken down into smaller particles by weathering. Plants grow in these rock particles and animals live within the soil. When organisms die, they decay to produce humus.

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## The process of fossilisation

