

# **Museum of World Treasures**

## **Geology Vocabulary List**

- All entries pertain directly to artifacts or signs in our exhibits.

**Rocks-** A collection of mineral particles gathered in a dense mass.

**Minerals-** A naturally occurring element or chemical compound that is both solid and inorganic. Minerals have set characteristics like their chemical composition and their crystalline structure.

**Meteorite-** A rock that has passed through the atmosphere and comes from outer space. Can be composed of most substances, but the most common is stone, iron, and silicate.

**Amethyst-** a purple gemstone that is a variety of quartz. The color is caused by iron or titanium impurities. The purest forms of amethyst are found in geodes (gas cavities) in volcanic rocks.

**Diamond-** The most famous and most expensive gem type in the world. It is clear and is the hardest known substance in the world, earning it a 10 on the Moh's Hardness Scale.

**Rock Polishing-** the method by which craftsmen cut and polish gems to make smooth surfaces and maximize cut and color. Polishing usually involves tumbling using various types of grits and polishing powders.

**Agate-** A gem composed of many types of crystals and traditionally found in volcanic rocks. Agates are known for their bands of color, caused by silica-rich solutions that filtered through the rocks in its hot magma stages.

**Pyrite-** also known as Fool's Gold. Amateurs occasionally confuse Gold and Pyrite because of their similar colors, however, pyrite is much harder than gold. It appears with an easily identified cubic or 12 sided structure.

**Tourmaline-** A mineral that is notable for exhibiting a range of colors including black, pink, blue, and several others, hence its name meaning "Stone with Mixed Colors". Its crystals are usually circular and trigonal.

**Igneous-** Rocks formed from magma that has cooled. They come in extrusive (volcanic explosions/eruptions) and intrusive (cool within the Earth and only go to the surface if other rocks erode or they are mined).

**Sedimentary-** Rocks formed from pieces of other rocks that have been eroded. The pieces find their way to another area where they are buried in layers and end up forming new rocks due to pressure. They are usually easily identifiable due to their composite nature.

**Metamorphic-** Rocks formed when igneous or sedimentary rocks are exposed to extreme heat or pressure which changes their crystal structure.

**Geode-** Round or oblong rocks that have a hard outer shell and a mineral rich and often crystal filled interior.

**Fossil-** The remains of an organic life form preserved in rocks.

**Ammonite-** Extinct sea creatures that had a hard, winding shell (Think of modern sea shells). Had very distinct evolution times and lived in most areas of the world. This makes for a very reliable dating system.

**Flourescent Rocks-** These minerals shine with fluorescent light when exposed to a UV light.

**Geochemical-** Process by which geodes gain their composition. They are formed primarily from volcanic gas bubbles, but can also occur from animal burrows or empty, earth cavities. Groundwater filled with minerals seeps into the hollows giving the geodes all the minerals it needs.

**Geothermal-** Process by which the geodes' crystals grow. Over millions of years, the crystals slowly bake and grow, while the outside does not. They grow from the shell to the middle.

**Magma (lava) Tube-** Natural passages formed by lava, by which lava travels during an eruption.

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