

How Rocks Are Like Dessert

Kyria Abrahams



Celia likes to dig in the backyard. She calls this game “Treasure Hunt.” When she plays Treasure Hunt, she puts on a tan explorer hat and a jacket with big pockets for collecting things. She is Celia the Brave, the greatest treasure hunter in the world.

She digs with the shovel and pours the dirt into the sieve. Then, Celia—the greatest treasure hunter in the world—shakes the sieve all around. She shakes it very gently, up and down, then side to side. Shaking dirt around is one of her favorite things to do. When she does this, all the big rocks stay on top of the sieve. They are too big to fall through the holes.

She finds rocks with beautiful stripes and patterns in them. The sun catches the edges of the rocks, and some of them shine like gemstones. The rocks she finds in her yard look different from the rocks she finds at her grandmother's house. She wonders why. For example, one rock she finds in her yard is broken in half, and she can see the inside of it. It has stripes and dots in it. It is grey and white. But the rocks from her grandmother's yard are orange.

Celia puts her rocks in a special box and writes TREASURE on the top with a marker. She asks herself why the rocks are striped with different colors and patterns.

She walks into the kitchen. Her father is making dessert. He is a pastry chef at a fancy restaurant. His job is to make sweets all day.

"Are these jewels?" she asks her father.

"Those are rocks," he says.

But to her, they are still jewels. "Why do they have stripes in them?" Celia asks.

"I think you should do research at the library," her father says.

"You always say that!" says Celia.

"I always say that because it's always a good idea," says her father.

The next day, Celia puts her favorite rock in her lunchbox and brings it to school. All day, she feels like she has a secret. After school, she goes to see the librarian. She brings her secret rock with her.

"Hello Celia," says Mr. Beakman the librarian.

"I'm Celia the Treasure Hunter today," Celia explains. She shows him her favorite rock.

"I see," says the librarian. "And I guess you want to know more about it."

Mr. Beakman takes Celia to the computer. He types in "Geology." Geology is the study of the physical earth, including rocks and minerals.

He shows Celia where to find books on geology. But the books are for older, high school students, and there are many words she doesn't know yet. So she just looks at the pictures, instead. Celia sees pictures of fossils and dinosaur bones. In the next picture, a volcano erupts and a layer of lava pours over the dinosaur. That lava dries and traps the bones inside. The next series of photos shows a big piece of ice called a *glacier*. The glacier melts and runs down over the rocks. It pushes different rocks with it. It makes patterns in the rock called *striations*.

Celia is confused. She understands how the water makes grooves in the top of the rock. But how would this make stripes *inside* of a rock?

She goes home after school and finds her father in the kitchen. She shows him the book.

"Can you help me understand how stripes get inside of a rock?" she asks.

Her father looks at the book and nods.

"Do you see the dessert I'm making?" he asks. "It's called tiramisu. Watch how I make it. It might help you understand."

First, he puts down a layer of tiny cakes called "lady fingers." Celia giggles at the name. Of course, they aren't actually fingers!

After he has one layer of cake, he spreads a layer of sugary cheese on top. This is followed by another layer of cake, another layer of delicious sweet cheese, and so on.

The tiramisu is in a deep glass bowl, and you can see the layers through the glass.

One layer of cake, one layer of cheese; it repeats all the way up to the top.

“It looks like a pattern,” she says. “It looks like stripes through the glass.”

“Well, I’m no geologist,” says dad. “I’m just a pastry chef. But I think your rock was made in a similar way to my dessert. One layer at a time.”

He cuts a slice of cake and puts it on a plate.

“Now imagine that instead of cake, these layers were made of different types of rocks.”

“I understand now!” says Celia. Then she says, “Good thing there are no dinosaur bones in my dessert.”

Celia and her father decide to eat some of the lesson. You can't eat rocks, but these layers are delicious!

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. What does Celia dig for in her backyard?

- A** rocks
- B** desserts
- C** books

2. What is compared to a rock in this story?

- A** water
- B** tiramisu
- C** a volcano

3. Celia's father thinks it is important for Celia to learn things by reading about them on her own.

What information from the story supports this statement?

- A** Celia's father is a pastry chef at a fancy restaurant. When Celia walks into the kitchen, he is making dessert.
- B** Celia's father thinks that the rock Celia found was made in a way similar to the dessert he is making. The dessert is called tiramisu.
- C** When Celia first asks her father why her rocks have stripes in them, he says, "I think you should do research at the library."

4. How are rocks and the cake that Celia's dad makes alike?

- A** They both have cheese in them.
- B** They are both found in the backyard.
- C** They are both made up of layers.

5. What is the main idea of this story?

- A how to choose a job
- B how a rock is like tiramisu
- C how to make tiramisu and other desserts

6. Read these sentences from the passage: "Her father is making **dessert**. He is a pastry chef at a fancy restaurant. His job is to make sweets all day."

What does the word "**dessert**" mean?

- A sweet food
- B lots of money
- C big trouble

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Celia wants to know why there are stripes in her rocks, _____ she goes to the library.

- A because
- B but
- C so

8. Where does Celia's father tell her to do research the first time she asks about the stripes in her rocks?

9. Celia does research about rocks and then goes back to her father. She asks him about stripes inside rocks again. What does he tell her this time?

10. Why does Celia's father tell her something different the second time she asks him about rock stripes? Support your answer with information from the story.

Teacher Guide & Answers**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 610

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8. Where does Celia's father tell her to do research the first time she asks about the stripes in her rocks?

Suggested answer: Celia's father tells her to do research at the library.

9. Celia does research about rocks and then goes back to her father. She asks him about stripes inside rocks again. What does he tell her this time?

Suggested answer: Answers may vary but should mention that Celia's father tells her that rocks are made in a way similar to tiramisu. A strong response will identify their similarity: rocks and tiramisu are both made up of layers.

10. Why does Celia's father tell her something different the second time she asks him about rock stripes? Support your answer with information from the story.

Suggested answer: Answers may vary, as long as they are supported by the story. For example, students may respond that Celia's father tells her something different the second time she asks about rock stripes because of her research. The first time she asks, he replies, "I think you should do research at the library." Because Celia's father knows she took his advice before coming back and asking him again, he is willing to answer her question the second time around.