



GRADED BEDDING

Discover how a graded bedding forms.

Materials

Clear plastic container with lid
Small and large rocks
Sand
Baby powder
Water
Spoon

Procedure

- Add a handful of larger rocks to the plastic container.
- Add a handful of the smaller rocks to the plastic container
- Add a few spoonfuls of sand and then a layer of baby powder.
- Add water until the container is almost full.
- Place lid onto the container and secure tightly.
- Shake the container and allow it to settle.

Results

The largest rocks settled on the bottom first, followed by the smaller rocks, sand, and baby powder.

Why?

Sediment can become suspended in moving water, such as a river during a flood or an ocean current during an underwater landslide. When that water slows down, sediment is deposited. Usually, larger sediment settles first, while finer sediment remains suspended for longer. You can see layers of larger sediment overlain by layers of progressively finer sediment in the container. This is called graded bedding and can be found in sediments as well as sedimentary rocks.



This activity was adapted from Generation Genius' "Make a Sedimentary Rock Formation" Activity. You can find more activities on their website, generationgenius.com