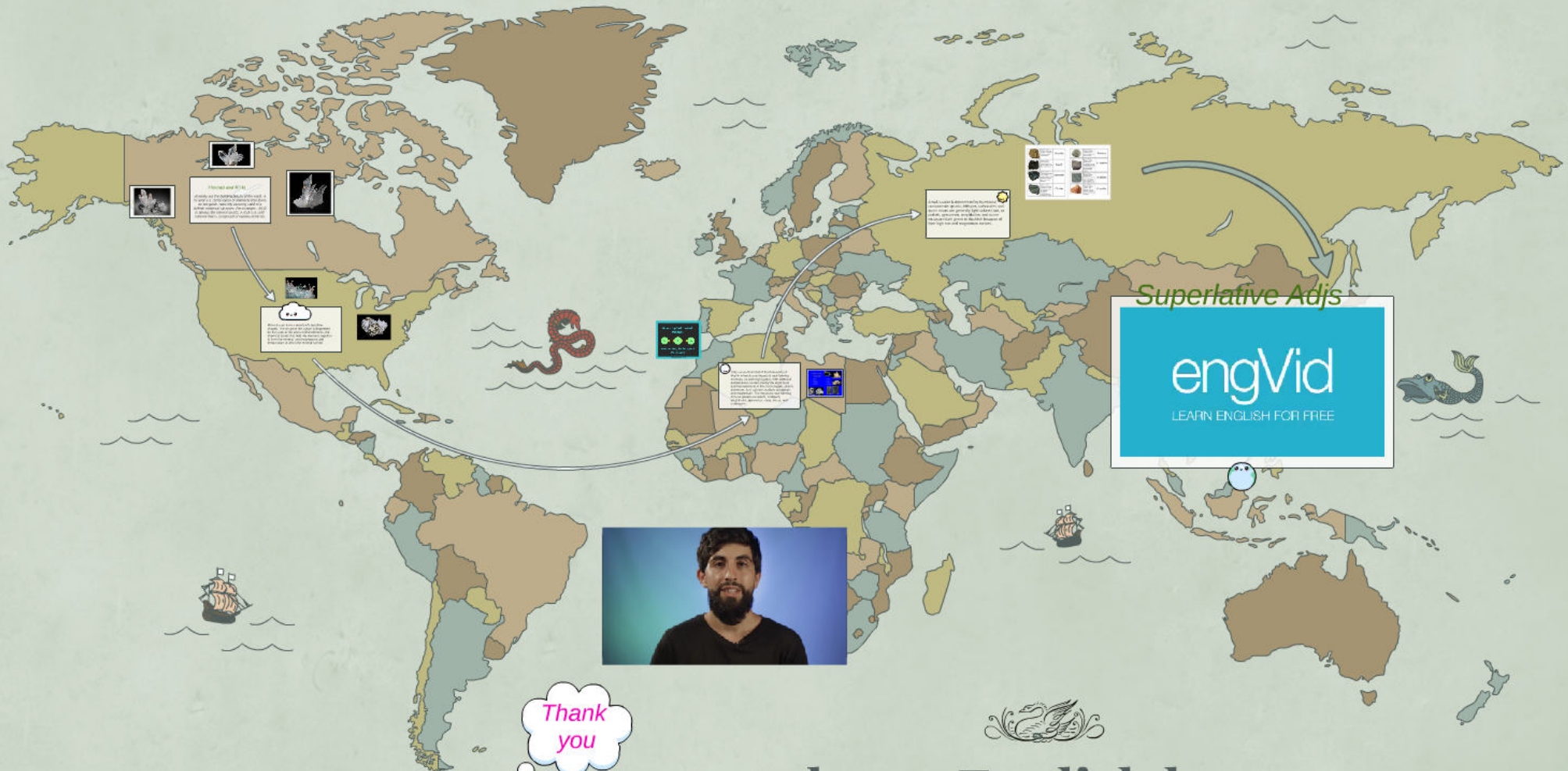




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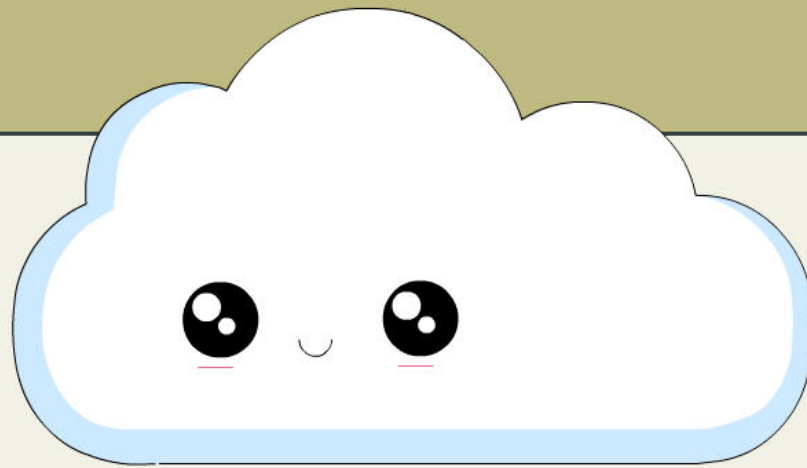
Minerals and Rocks

Minerals are the building blocks of the earth. A mineral is a combination of elements that forms an inorganic, naturally occurring solid of a definite chemical structure. For example : SiO_2 is always the mineral quartz. A rock is a solid material that is composed of various minerals.









Minerals can have a variety of crystalline shapes. The shape of the crystal is dependent on the sizes of the atoms of the elements, the chemical bonds that hold the elements together to form the mineral, and the pressure and temperature at which the mineral formed.







Only several hundred of the thousands of known minerals are important rock-forming minerals. As one might guess, their chemical compositions contain mostly the eight most common elements in the crust-oxygen, silicon, aluminum, iron, calcium, sodium, potassium, and magnesium. The important rock forming mineral groups are quartz, feldspars, amphiboles, pyroxenes, clays, micas, and carbonates.

rock forming minerals

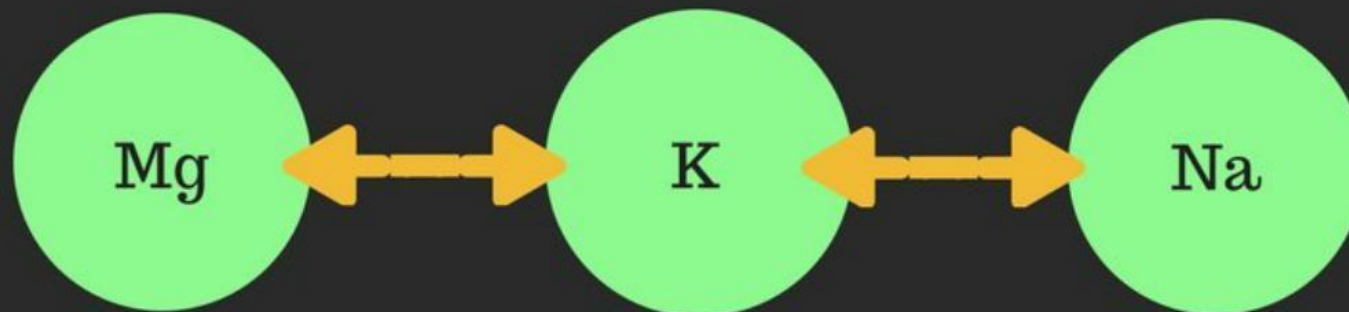
- quartz
- feldspar
- amphibole
- pyroxene



- mica
- clay
- calcite
- gypsum



Balancing 3 of the Main Minerals:



Magnesium, Sodium, and Potassium





A rock's color is determined by its mineral components: quartz, feldspar, carbonates and some micas are generally light-colored, tan, or pinkish, pyroxenes, amphiboles, and some micas are dark green to blackish because of their high iron and magnesium content.



Igneous Rock -
Intrusive with large
crystals. Composed
mainly of quartz
and feldspar.

Granite



Igneous Rock -
Dark Colored,
Extrusive with fine
grain crystals. Forms
from cooled lava.

Basalt



Igneous Rock -
Forms when molten
rock material
cooled rapidly. The
result is a volcanic
glass. No crystals
(usually)

Obsidian



Igneous Rock -
Intrusive. A coarse-
grained rock that
contains a mixture
of feldspar,
pyroxene,
hornblende and
sometimes quartz.

Diorite



Igneous Rock -
Extrusive. A light-
colored rock. It
forms through very
rapid cooling.

Pumice



Igneous Rock -
Extrusive. A fine-
grained rock
composed mainly
of plagioclase with
other minerals such
as hornblende,
pyroxene and
biotite.

Andesite



Igneous Rock -
Intrusive. Coarse-
grained, dark-
colored. It is usually
black or dark green in
color. It is the most
abundant rock in the
deep oceanic crust.

Gabbro



Igneous Rock -
Extrusive. a light-
colored, fine-
grained rock that
typically contains
quartz and feldspar
minerals.

Rhyolite

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