

3 - 5 Earth Science
Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program



What color streak does a mineral make?

MATERIALS

- Collection of minerals
- Porcelain
- Sheets of various colored paper
- Colored pencils

PROCEDURES

1. Select one of the minerals from the collection.
2. Try to make a streak on the porcelain with the mineral
3. Does it make a streak? If so what color does it make?
 1. Try to make a streak with each of the other minerals in that collection.
 2. What do you notice about the color of the streak as compared to the color of the mineral?
 3. Put the minerals in groups according to the color of their streaks
 4. Will any of the minerals write on paper? If so, try drawing a picture. Try different colors of paper as well as different colors of minerals.

TEACHER INFORMATION

One of the most common tests made in classifying minerals is the streak test. A porcelain plate, called a streak plate, is used by rubbing the mineral against it to determine the color of powder that the mineral produces.

The color of the streak is frequently different from the actual color of the mineral that made it. If the mineral collection includes talc, anthracite (coal), or gypsum, students should be able to write on paper with them.

Nevada State Science Standards

E.5.C.4 – *Students know rock is composed of different combinations of minerals.*

P.5.A.3 – *Students know materials can be classified by their observable physical and chemical properties (e. g., magnetism, conductivity, density, and solubility).*