

USING THE GEOLOGY ACTIVITIES

Taking students to James River Park in Richmond can be an educational experience in itself. Just being on the river and showing students real examples of tectonic activity in their own back yard can be a powerful tool to help students grasp many of the concepts taught in Earth Science.

The Virginia SOLs are documented in each of the activities. The geologic forces that shaped the Fall Zone are many. In the activity labeled **Relative Dating** students can use the laws of relative dating to determine the age of intrusions and faults. Before students can appreciate the Petersburg Granite and know that it is made of the minerals quartz, feldspar, and biotite, they should know what a mineral is. The activity **Is It a Mineral** will help students become familiar with the definition of a mineral.

The river is a sediment making machine that has weathered the igneous and metamorphic rocks of the Piedmont and deposited them in the Coastal Plain to become sedimentary rock. This is a perfect example of the rock cycle at work. Weathering and Erosion are steps in the rock cycle that are difficult to teach in the confines of a classroom. **Weathering Chalk** and **Wind Erosion** are two activities that reinforce the scientific method and give students a first-hand look at geologic processes. While walking in the Park, students can help keep the park beautiful for others by collecting trash that has been improperly disposed of. At the end of your experience, they can classify the trash into things made from Renewable or Nonrenewable materials by completing the activity labeled **River Trash**.