

# What is a Mineral?

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6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

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## Properties of Minerals:

- **Solid**
  - Cannot be a liquid or a gas
- **Naturally Occurring**
  - Found in nature, not man-made
- **Inorganic**
  - Is not alive and never was, non-living
- **Formula**
  - Has a chemical formula, most are formed from compounds of two or more elements, some minerals consist of one element ex. Au
- **Crystal Structure**
  - A definite structure in which atoms are arranged

## Definition:

A mineral is a naturally formed, inorganic solid that has a definite crystalline structure.

## Questions to ask yourself when determining if an item is a mineral or not:

- Is it non-living material?
- Is it a solid?
- Is it formed in nature?
- Does it have a crystalline structure?

The next few slides show an assortment of items.

With your partner, categorize the items as either:

**Minerals**  
or  
**Non-Minerals**

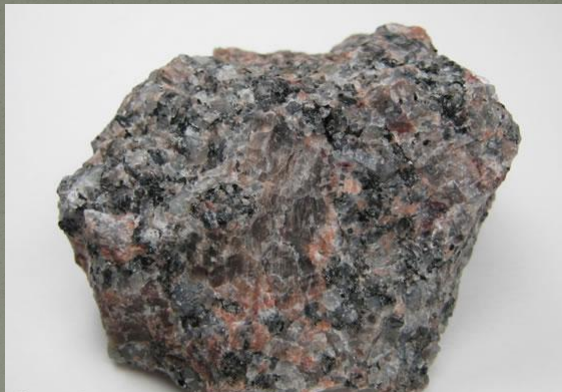




Topaz



Bones



Granite



Quartz



Pearls



Talc



Icebergs



Diamond



Coal



Rock Salt

And the answers are...



Wood









## And the answers are...

- Minerals

- a) Gold
- b) Topaz
- c) Quartz
- d) Talc
- e) Iceberg\*
- f) Diamonds

- Non-Minerals

- a) Wood - once living
- b) Fossils - once living
- c) Bone - living material
- d) Granite - intrusive igneous rock
- e) Pearls - made by oysters
- f) Coal - Sedimentary rock
- g) Rock Salt - Sedimentary rock

According to [IMA](#) - ice is listed as a mineral