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A Rock is Lively by Dianna Hutts Aton, Illustrated by Sylvia Long

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Author: Aston, Dianna Hutts

Title: *A Rock is Lively*

Illustrator: Long, Sylvia

Year of Publication: 2012

Publisher: Chronicle Books

ISBN: 9781452106458

Number of pages: 40

Rating: Outstanding

Reading/Interest Level: Primary; Intermediate

Keywords: Rocks; Minerals; Gems; Nonfiction; Picture Book

Review:

Aston and Long's work shows that nonfiction can be as engaging as any storybook and is likely to inspire new rock collectors in classrooms or homes alike. As with the other offerings in this series, the text focuses on cycles – rocks' formation in the earth, many uses and shapes, eventual erosion, and reformation in the earth. Additionally endpapers follow the series' tradition of being covered in relevant illustrations, this time carefully identifying every rock featured in the book. Without a doubt the author and illustrator did their homework here as evidenced by the impressive list of acknowledgements in the beginning which includes professors from the University of Missouri. Long's illustrations will remind readers of candy with their sparkling color. Her watercolors show a wide range of rocks, minerals, metals, and gems in their raw forms, which children (and many adults) will be less familiar with. The text is hand-lettered, evoking a sense of old-fashioned field guides. Aston combines prose headings (packed with adjectives like "helpful," "creative," and "galactic") with more detailed informational passages. This makes the book ideal for multiple ages as younger readers may prefer the rich pictures and short headings while older readers and passionate rockhounds will explore further.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

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