The Rock Cycle

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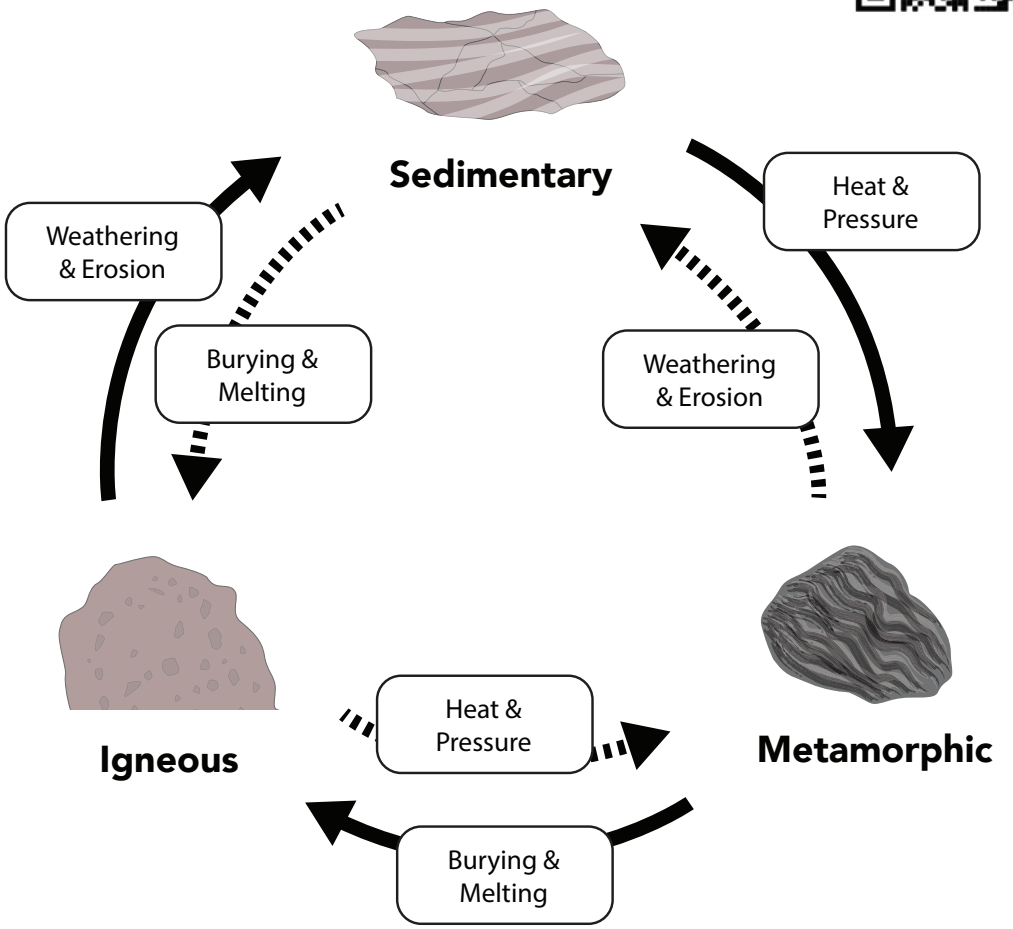
When rocks are pushed deep under the Earth's surface, they may melt into magma. If the conditions no longer exist for the magma to stay in its liquid state, it cools and solidifies into an **igneous rock**. Any of the three main types of rocks (igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks) can melt into magma and cool into igneous rocks.

Rocks exposed to high temperatures and pressures can be changed physically or chemically to form a different rock, called **metamorphic**. These rocks commonly exhibit distinct bands of differing mineralogy and colors, called foliation. Any pre-existing type of rock can be modified by the processes of metamorphism.

Rocks exposed to the atmosphere are variably unstable and subject to the processes of weathering and erosion. Weathering and erosion break the original rock down into smaller fragments and carry away dissolved material. This fragmented material accumulates and is buried. While an individual grain of sand is still a member of the class of rock it was formed from, a rock made up of such grains fused together is **sedimentary**.



ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS!

An igneous rock exposed to weathering & erosion may become: _____

Metamorphic rocks typically exhibit colorful bands, often called: _____

A rock made up of fused together pieces of sand is known as: _____

What is needed to transform metamorphic into igneous rock? _____