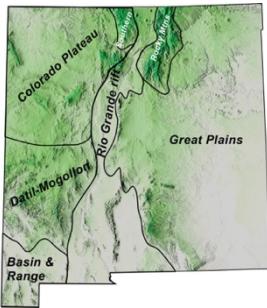




## New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science “A Walk Through New Mexico” SCAVENGER HUNT

*This outdoor exhibit allows you to “walk through New Mexico.” As you follow the sidewalks, you will see some of the state’s diversity of landscape (topography), geology (rocks), and vegetation (plants). You may even see some “residents” of New Mexico including lizards, butterflies, birds, and roadrunners!*



*The exhibit is divided into the geologic regions of New Mexico. These regions differ in many ways. Read the introduction signs about each region and then read the individual rock and plant signs and see if you can answer the questions below.*

*Explore the natural wonder of New Mexico.*

1. Start at the east corner of the Museum building at the artwork entitled *Del Pasado Al Futuro* (From the Past to the Future). This piece of art was created by artist Federico Armijo in 1986 to celebrate the building of the Museum. The rock used in the artwork is New Mexico travertine, quarried near Belen, New Mexico.



*If you were an artist, would you choose to use travertine for this artwork? Why or Why not?*

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2. Walk around the corner and enter the Southern Rio Grande Rift region. Here, there is a lava flow called the Carrizozo lava flow (Valley of Fires State Park). It erupted only 5000 years ago. Small boulders of the lava flow are scattered on the ground here. Take a look at these rocks.



*Think of 3 words that would describe them.*

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\_\_\_\_\_ , and \_\_\_\_\_ .

[Type here]

3. The Datil-Mogollon region is an area of very old and gigantic volcanic eruptions. Find the rock labeled “Ash Flow Tuff.” This is a volcanic rock that erupted as a glowing cloud of hot ash that rolled along the ground until it solidified into solid rock.

*What color is it?*

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*Rub your hand over the surface of this rock. How would you describe the feel of this rock (smooth, rough, hard, soft ?)*

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4. In the Southern Rio Grande Rift region , find a plant called a Soaptree Yucca. These yuccas can grow to be up to 20’ tall.

*Can you think of a reason why it might have been named a “Soaptree”?*

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5. In the Basin & Range Region, some of the rocks are very old. Look for a rock that says “San Andres Formation, Late Permian Period” on its sign. This means that the rock unit has been named “San Andres” by geologists and that it was deposited near the end of the geologic time period called the “Permian” (about 300 million years ago, long before the dinosaurs existed).

*Look at the sign. What kind of rock is this? Circle the correct answer to complete the sentence below:*

*This rock is (limestone) (shale) (sandstone). It was deposited at the bottom of an ocean that once covered New Mexico hundreds of millions of years ago.*

6. Next to the San Andres rock, there is a plant that is a New Mexico native and part of its official name refers to New Mexico.

*Read the sign and complete the name below:*

*New Mexico Agave (Agave \_\_\_\_\_)*

[Type here]

7. Find the Central Rio Grande Rift region. Albuquerque is one of the cities within this region. Look around you here and you will see two rocks that are commonly found on the west side and the east side of Albuquerque.

*What age is listed for each of these rocks on the signs?*

*The lava flows of the Albuquerque Volcanoes (on the west mesa of Albuquerque) are \_\_\_\_\_ years old*

*The Sandia Granite (in the Sandia Mountains east of Albuquerque) is \_\_\_\_\_ billion years old*

8. Turn down the sidewalk toward the building and you are in the Colorado Plateau region. Find a rock labeled Mesa Verde Group. This rock is found at the famous archaeological site (Mesa Verde National Park) in Colorado but it is also found here in New Mexico.



*What is this rock? Circle the correct answer.*

*It is (limestone) (shale) (sandstone).*

9. Cross over the bridge toward the Planetarium. You are back in the Central Rio Grande Rift region here and there is a very distinctive tree that is common in the South and North Valleys of Albuquerque.

*Find the Cottonwood tree. Draw a sketch of the leaf of a Cottonwood.*



10. On the other side of the Planetarium you are back in the Colorado Plateau region.

*Can you find the object in this photo?*

*It is a petrified (also called fossilized) tree log. Touch it. Does it feel like tree or rock?*

\_\_\_\_\_

[Type here]

11. Walk up the side sidewalk toward the Museum building. Next to the fossilized tree log is a fossilized palm tree stump. Can you imagine palm trees in New Mexico? Both the fossil tree and the fossil palm tree lived in New Mexico about 100 million years ago, when New Mexico was a tropical land partially covered by an ocean.

*Read the label on the palm stump.*

*What is the name of the geological Period when New Mexico was a seacoast?*

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12. Continue on the sidewalk past the planetarium and toward the Museum building and you are continuing to walk through the Colorado Plateau region. This region is known for its beautiful layers of red and white rocks forming mesas and buttes. Find a red rock and a white rock in this area

*Touch the rocks. What does the texture of each rock feel like?*

*The red Rock feels \_\_\_\_\_*

*The white rock feels \_\_\_\_\_*

13. Walk back to the sidewalk along Mountain Road and turn right. At the edge of the Colorado Plateau region, find the rock called Basalt from the McCarty's Lava Flow. This is the youngest volcanic eruption in New Mexico and was witnessed by Native Americans.

*Read the sign and circle the correct answer below.*

*The McCarty's lava flow is (390 years old) (3,900 years old) (39,000 years old)*



14. In the Southern Rocky Mountain region, find this rock. (Hint: It is located close to the driveway at the end of the landscaped area.) It is a natural pink or violet color!

This rock is called lepidolite. It is a source of the element lithium and used to be mined at Questa, New Mexico.

15. What is your favorite rock or plant in this exhibit?

Name it, describe it, or draw it.....