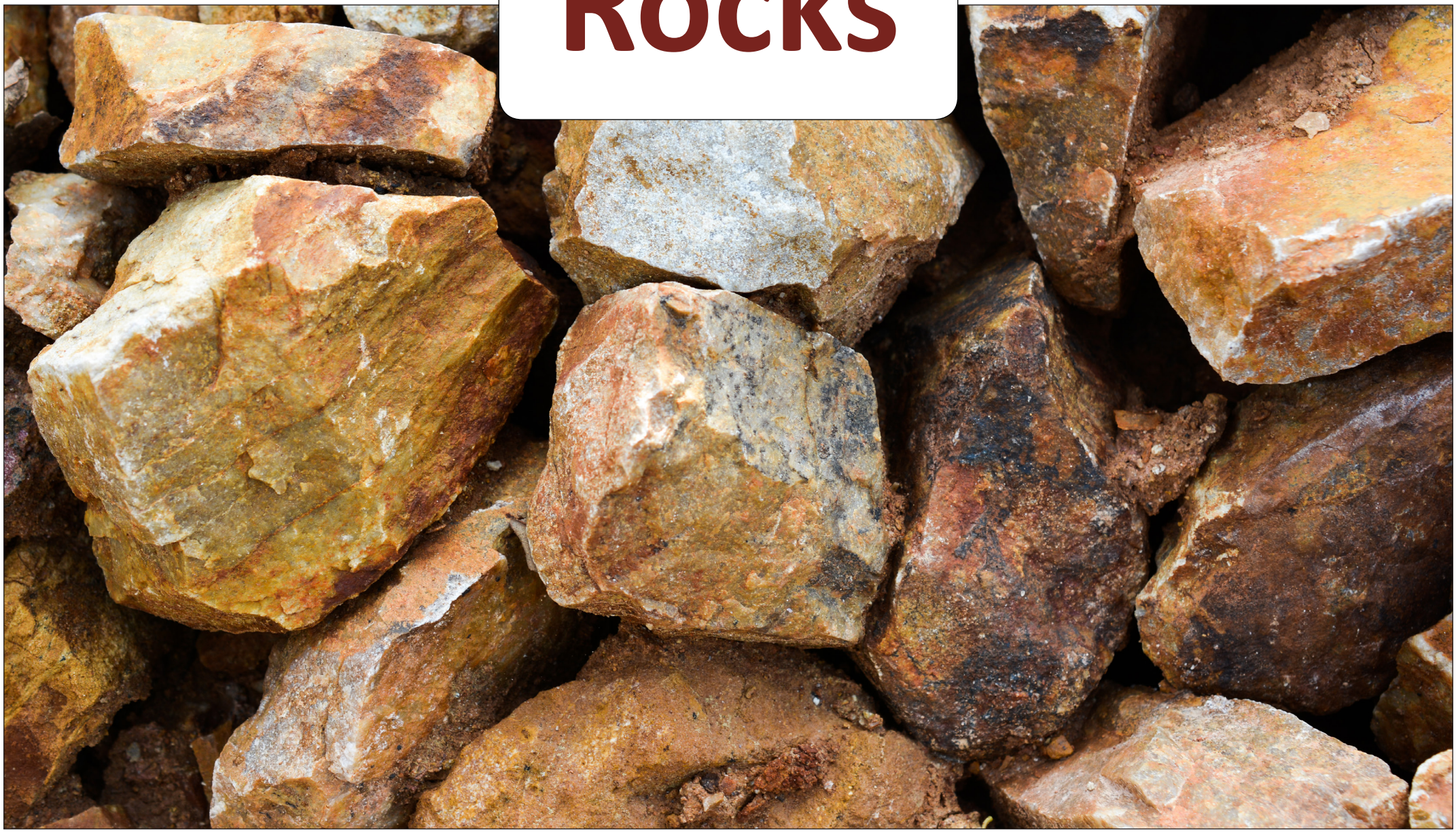
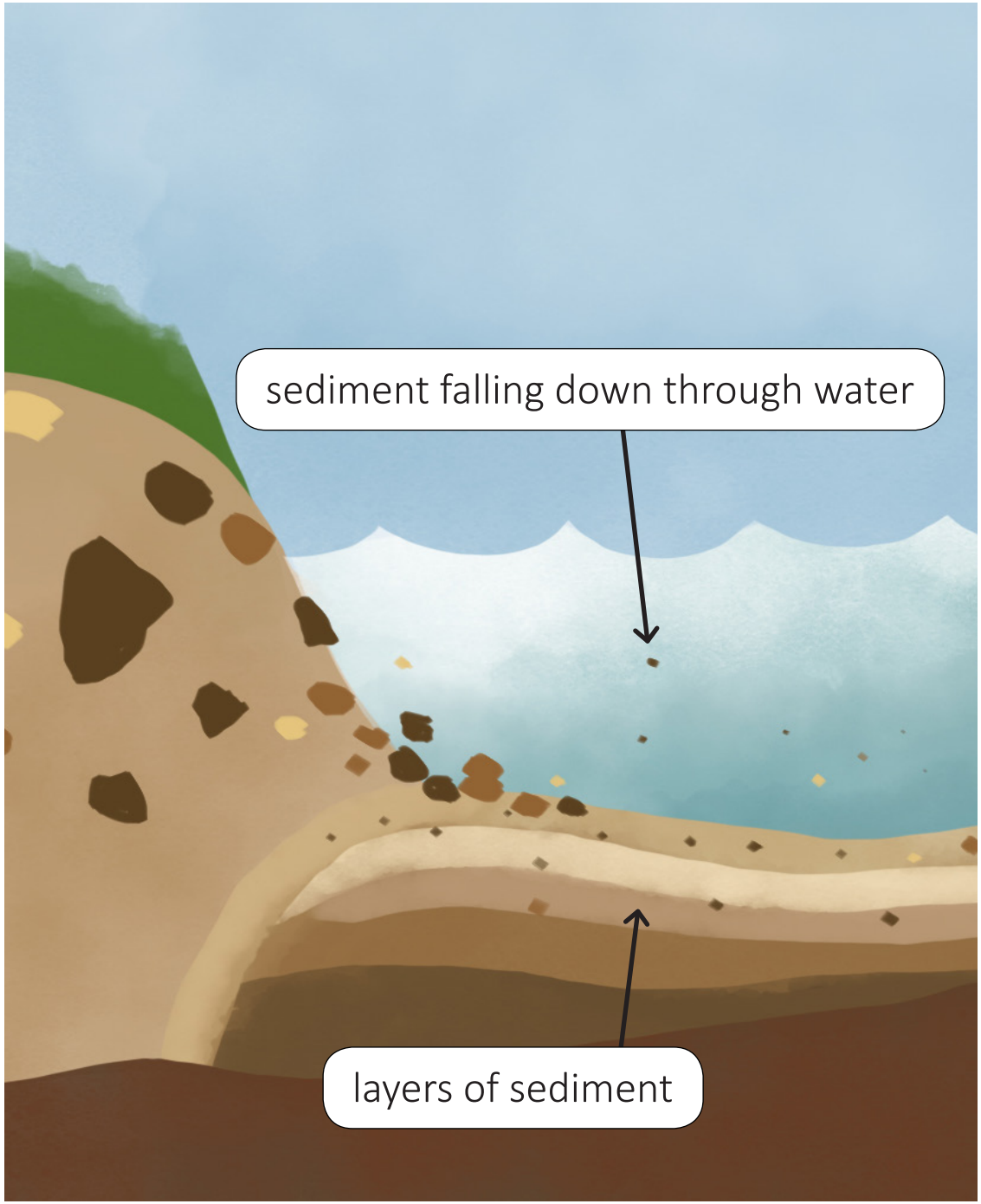
Rocks

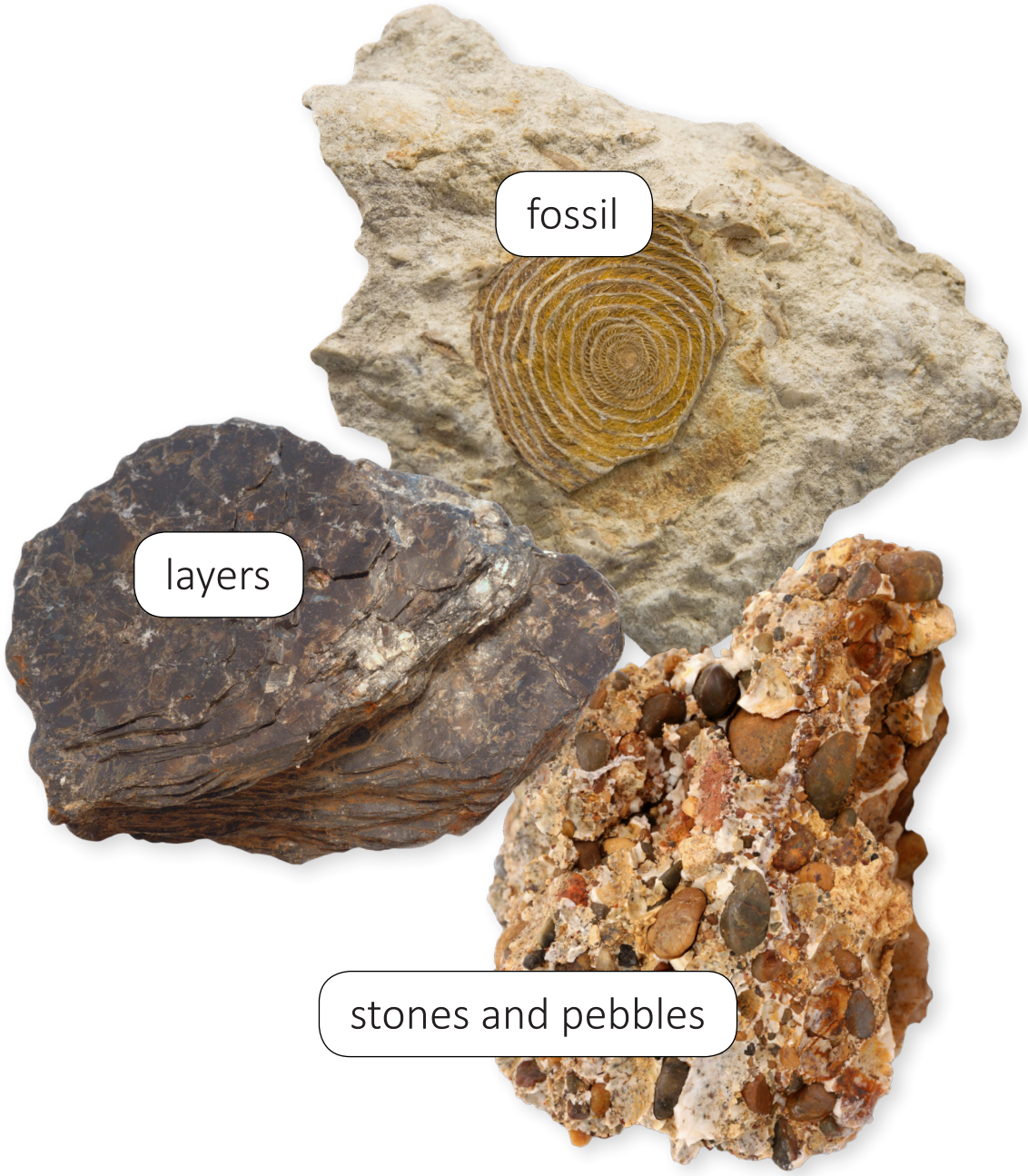


There are three different types of rock. They are **sedimentary**, **igneous** and **metamorphic**. The differences between them are due to how they are formed.



Sedimentary rocks

Sedimentary rocks are formed from particles of sand, shells and pebbles. Together, this is called sediment. Sediment settles at the bottom of seas, lakes and rivers. Layers of sediment build up over time. The sediments on top squash the older layers underneath them. Over millions of years, the layers turn into rock.



Properties of sedimentary rocks

Sedimentary rocks are fairly soft and crumble easily. They are usually formed in layers. Sand, pebbles and stones can sometimes be seen in them. Only sedimentary rocks contain fossils.

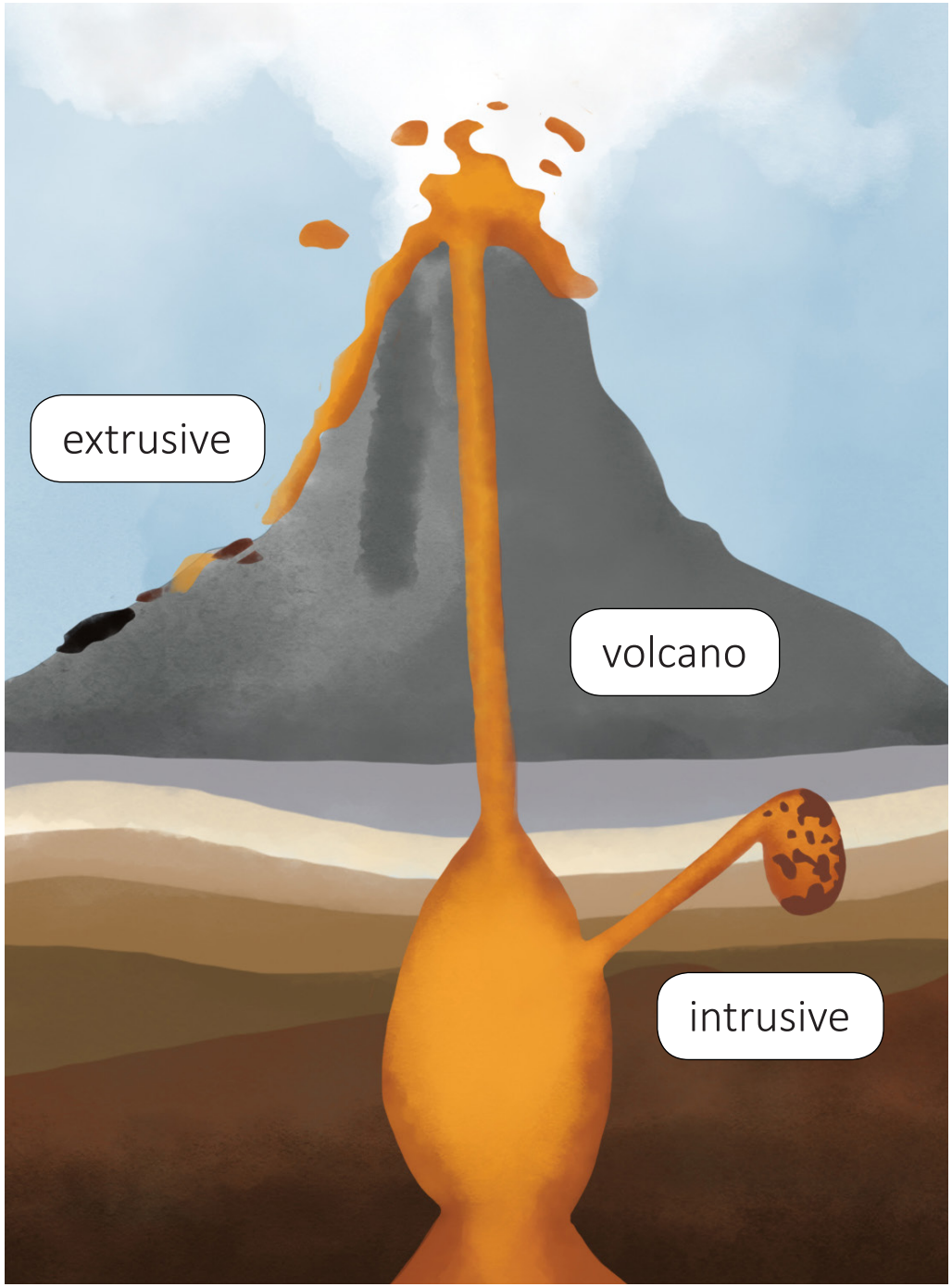
Examples of sedimentary rocks

limestone

sandstone

coal

chalk



Igneous rocks

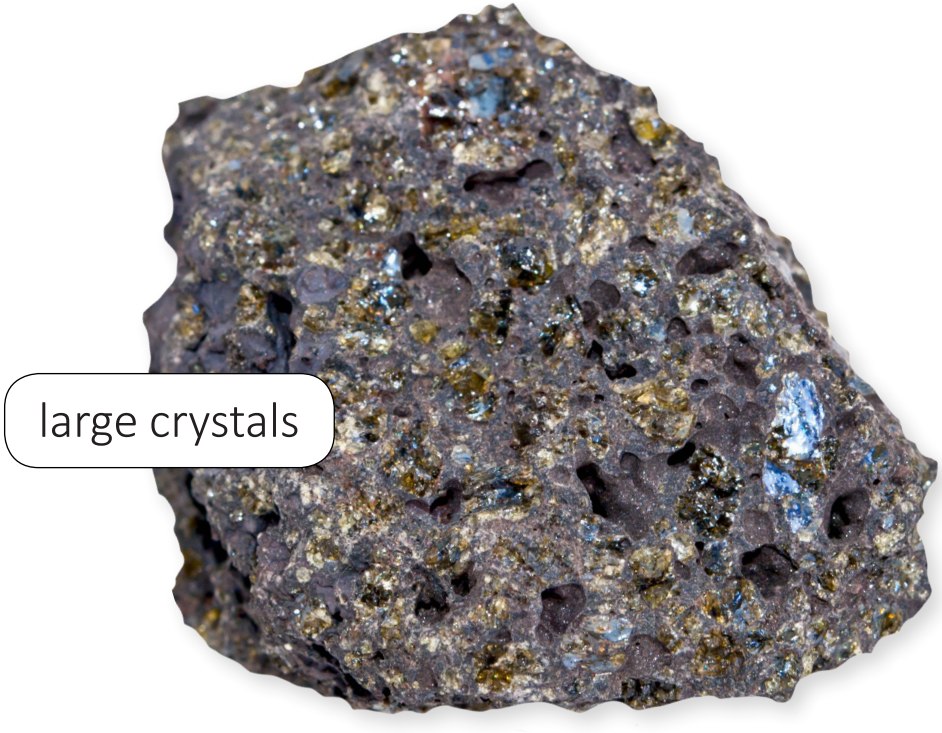
Igneous rocks are formed when molten (liquid) rock called magma cools and hardens.

Extrusive igneous rocks are formed above the Earth's surface when the magma erupts as lava from a volcano. The lava quickly cools and becomes hard rock.

Intrusive igneous rocks are formed when magma below the Earth's surface cools down slowly and becomes hard rock.

Properties of igneous rocks

Extrusive igneous rocks are often found near volcanoes. They look shiny and glasslike. They are usually hard and contain small crystals because the liquid lava has cooled quickly. Sometimes, gas bubbles become trapped in the rock, leaving tiny holes and spaces.



Intrusive igneous rocks are found under the ground or on the Earth's surface where the ground that was once above them has eroded. They are hard and usually contain large crystals because the liquid magma has cooled slowly.

Examples of igneous rocks

Extrusive

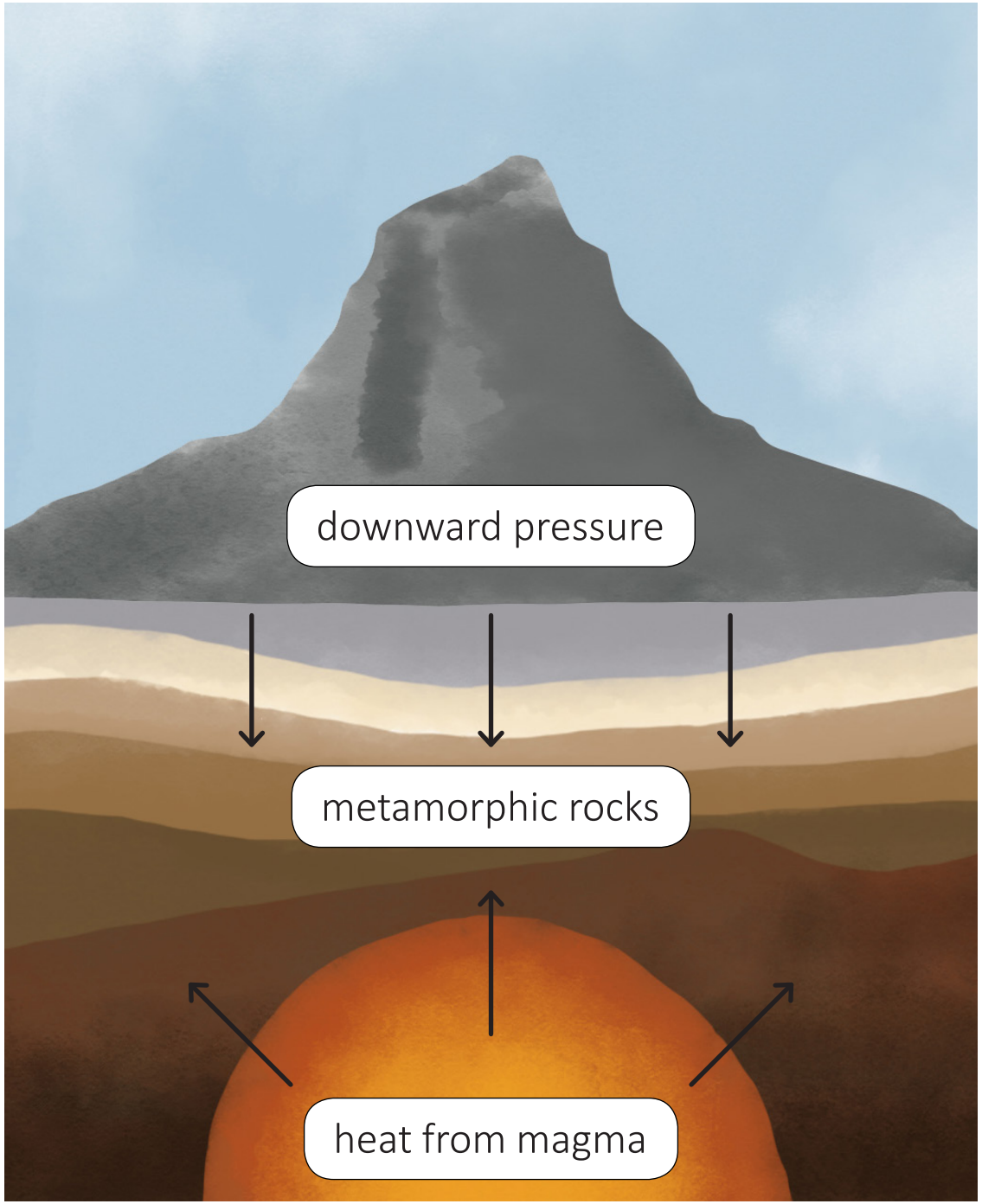
obsidian

pumice

Intrusive

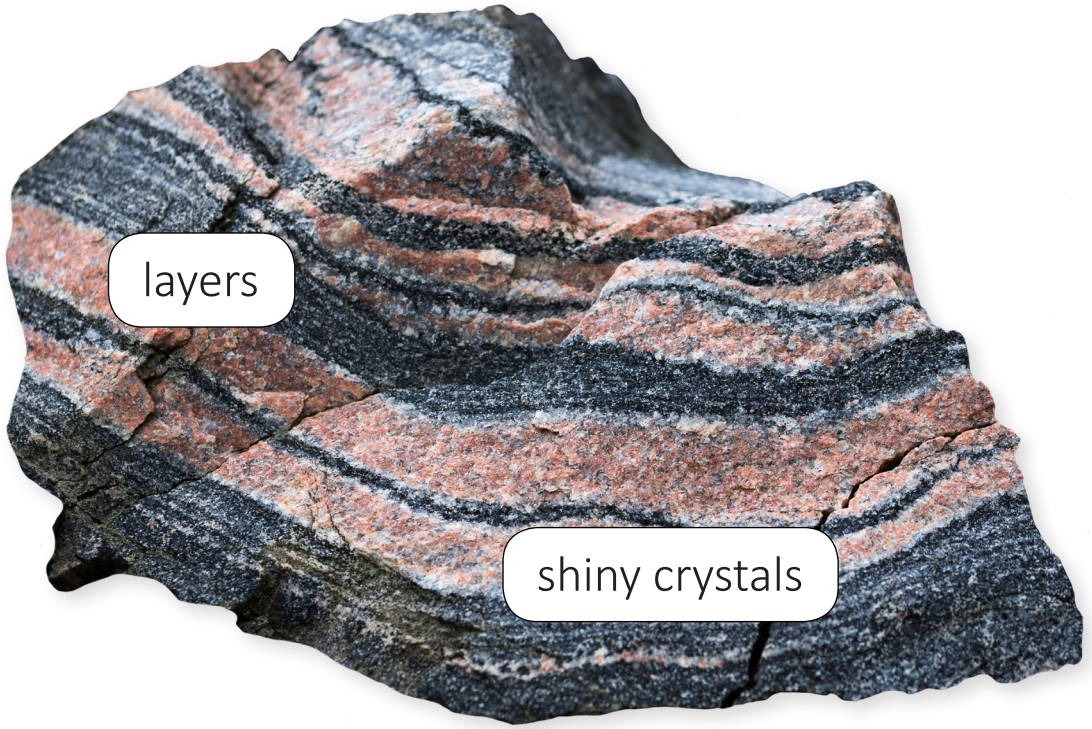
granite

gabbro



Metamorphic rocks

Metamorphose means to change into a different form. Metamorphic rocks may have been sedimentary, igneous or existing metamorphic rocks but have been changed over time due to the pressure and heat underground.



Properties of metamorphic rocks

Metamorphic rocks are often found in mountain ranges. They are usually hard and can contain layers and shiny crystals.

Examples of metamorphic rocks

marble

slate

quartzite

anthracite