



"... that was the best field trip I ever went on!" gr 5 boy

With that sort of endorsement, it was easy to want to encourage other teachers to visit gravel pits or quarries.

1. Should the trip come before or after the unit of study?

There is no best way so simply judge it according what seems right for your class. Going before will help the students relate better to the unit material but they will not be as attentive to details as they will know little about the industry. When the trip follows the study, the pressure is off to make it an academic event as it serves to bring alive the academic content. It also is something to look forward to. In my experience, the trip at the end worked well even though I did not have these study materials as lead up material.

2. How would I find a cooperative gravel pit operator?

The Aggregate Producers Association can provide you with the names of Association members in your area. As well, the Yellow pages will give the names of gravel producers in your area - look for: Aggregates/concrete aggregates/gravel/sand & gravel/quarries/rocks/crushed rocks . Simply phone or drop around to the pit and speak to the manager and outline what you hope to accomplish with your visit. If you have thought it out before meeting, you will likely find cooperation.

3. Why should a gravel pit want my class to come?

- it enables 25 kids, a teacher and several parents to become supporters of the aggregate industry in that area
- the operator gains positive PR in the community
 - invite the local paper to cover the visit
 - submit an article to the local paper
 - get a note in your school newsletter
 - demonstrate the knowledge the kids already have
 - the industry needs local friends

4. Is a gravel pit a safe place?

- visit the site first
- plan the tour with the operator
- arrange hard hats and orange vests for the students to wear - if the operator thinks he will get more visits, he may be willing to actually buy a set of these
- station the parents around the edges of the students while in the pit
- take a long rope along which can serve as a guide which students must stay behind while walking or listening to explanations
- ensure the pit employees know you are there
- review with students safe practice

- YES... a pit can be a safe place if planned well.

5. What can we do in a gravel pit?

- watch gravel be extracted
- watch a crusher
- watch the screening action
- watch a conveyor in action
- watch gravel be loaded into trucks etc.
- see the gravel seams and hills
- throw rocks into the water pond which is usually present
- jump off the piles of rock and sand - establish boundaries
- identify various rock products
- compare unmined property, mine area, reclaimed areas
- see cross sections of the ground to see the various layers of soil, gravel, sand and clay
- watch concrete being made and loaded (if available)
- mix concrete
- **Make a concrete memento:**
 - fill a cup/paper plate/large circle of plastic from cut our plastic pail - put wax paper under so it lifts off easily later
 - decorate the top with a pattern of different colored/sized pebbles
 - put a hand print into the concrete
 - make a garden stepping stone
 - have a truck deliver the mementos when they are dry
 - leave a slab behind as a living tribute to your visit - names?
- BBQ - might the operators be interested in doing a lunch time BBQ of hot-dogs/pop/chips
- take home samples to do art projects with
- take photos for a school display

6. How could we follow up the field trip?

- send a large card/poster from the students to the pit operator for him to put on public display
- submit an article to the local paper/have students write articles for a feature on aggregates
- do art projects with rock products
- do an internet hunt for aggregate sites
- research local aggregate sites
- let other grade 5 teachers know how successful your trip was
- submit pictures and testimonials to the BCAPA

7. For more discussion on field trips contact Barry McLean at Valley Gravel in Aldergrove or Bev Kaiser 604 850 0077 ilearn@home.com