

Pop Rocks! Engaging first-year geology students by deconstructing and correcting scientific misconceptions in popular culture. A practice report

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Abstract

Popular culture abounds with ill-conceived notions about Earth's processes. Movies, books, music, television and even video games frequently misrepresent fundamental scientific principles, warping viewers' perceptions of the world around them. First year geoscience students are not immune to pop culture's portrayal of earth science and the misconceptions they bring to Geology 101 cloud their ability to differentiate between fact and fiction. Working within an action research context, a semester-long assessment was designed with the intent to highlight and subsequently challenge students' misconceptions using examples of "bad geoscience" from pop culture. Students were required to practice and refine generic skills within this context. This project succeeded in engaging students, but requires refinement to become more effective in enhancing their geoscience literacy.

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