

LIMESTONE DISCOVERY TRAIL

Hello there! Welcome to the limestone discovery trail. You'll be outside for about 20 minutes, exploring the many uses of limestone through a series of challenges and tasks. Don't worry, you don't need to write anything down!

Go outside on the upper level of the building and onto the car park, towards the gates the cars come in through, then look for the long sweeping path to the left of the main gates heading up the hill. Head to the top of this path and look for the big text panel.



Look at the panel. Can you see the boat on the picture?

Look down at the canal. How many boats can you see down there? Are they all the same? What is different about them?

These are the trip boats that take passengers into the mines. Years ago, boats the same size but without seats carried limestone out of the mines. It would have been very busy here, with lots of boats queuing up to go through the tunnel.

Head back down to the bottom of the path.

Can you spot a wooden post with a spinner on it?



This post tells you all about limestone, which is the rock that the miners took out of the ground here.

Can you think of anything that people might have used limestone for? **Get some ideas from these pictures.**

Limestone is still used for these things today!



Head towards the blue cabin.

To the right of the cabin is a path that leads down the hill towards the canal. Head down the path to find the next oak post. It's about half way down the slope.



The canal here looked very different two hundred years ago when the mines were working.

Can you see the arches next to the tunnel entrance? How many are there?

Those arches are limekilns. There were used to heat up the rocks until they got very hot. Two hundred years ago there were rows of limekilns all along the other side of the canal. What do you think it would have been like here with all those fires burning?

The heated rocks were used to make very high quality iron. The iron was used for making lots of things. What do you think they might have made with iron hundreds of years ago?

Here are some ideas. What are they? Can you think of anything else?



Walk back up the path then turn right and walk across the front of the blue cabin. The next post is just beyond the cabin.



As well as heavy industry, the limestone was also used for many other jobs. This post tells you about how it was used to make plants grow better!

Have a look at the picture on the post. What fruit is being grown? Does the text give you an idea where it might be growing?



Head along the path towards the entrance to the Portal building. Just past the entrance doors you'll see the next oak post.



This post tells you about quicklime, which is another thing that is made from limestone.

Quicklime is an ingredient in lime mortar, which was used when they built the canals. Can you find the reason why they used lime mortar on the post?

All of the forms of limestone are connected in the limestone cycle.

To see the cycle for yourself, keep following this path to find the last oak post.

It's at the end of the car park.



Spin the panels to see how each form of limestone was turned into the next. Some used heat, others used chemicals to make the change.

Now you've learnt about them all, which forms do you think would be the most useful if you lived in the towns and cities? Which would be most useful if you lived out in the countryside?

Well done, you've completed
the limestone discovery trail!



You can find more fun family activities to download on our website:
www.dudleycanaltrust.org.uk

