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Cement making demystified

Ever wondered how rocks are heated, melted and turned into cement? Why is cement used for so many things in our world? How do cement plants get the rocks and is it sustainable?

The British Cement Association (BCA) has launched five educational units aimed at 7-11 year olds to help explain how this essential building product is used to create our basic infrastructure, including houses, schools, bridges and roads. Cement is the essential ingredient in concrete, which is the second most consumed substance in the world after water.

The units will enable teachers to incorporate cement industry issues into the national curriculum. The initial set has been designed for Key Stage Two and offers opportunities in science, geography and citizenship.

Speaking after the launch, Mike Gilbert, Chief Executive of the British Cement Association said: "The units are a fun way to learn how cement is made and the factors that can influence production. The lesson plans and the entertaining, practical sessions will explain how the cement manufacturing industry is overcoming challenges to achieve sustainability. Some older people may even be tempted to make their own concrete fossils!"

The units can be downloaded from the British Cement Association's website, www.cementindustry.co.uk.

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For further information:

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Notes to Editors:

1. The units have been developed against schemes of work recommended by the Department for Education and Skills. Each has been written by a qualified teacher and tested by a group of other teachers. The units can be used as stand-alone teaching aids, but can also be used in tandem with cement works visits.
2. The British Cement Association (BCA) is the trade and research organisation that represents the interests of the United Kingdom's cement industry in its relations with Her Majesty's Government, the European Union and relevant organisations in the United Kingdom. The members of the BCA (Buxton Lime Industries, Castle Cement, CEMEX UK and Lafarge Cement UK) are the major domestic manufacturers of Portland cement producing over 90% of the cement sold in the UK.

The cement industry has an annual turnover of £775 million and is a major supplier to the construction industry. It employs around 3,400 people directly with a further 15,000 jobs depending upon its operations.