Petroglyphs are rock carvings found all over the world made by removing some of a rock’s surface by pecking or scraping with a stone tool. In contrast, pictographs are images painted on a rock’s surface or cave wall.

Pecking results in a 3D relief or “raised carving” of a figure. Scraping away the weathered surface reveals a drawing in a different color.

Petroglyphs often have symbolic or spiritual meaning to the carvers of the past and their descendants today. Therefore, petroglyphs are valuable as an archaeological record of past culture and important to people today as part of their living culture.

Petroglyphs are fragile, non-renewable cultural resources that can never be replaced if damaged. As such, they should be preserved and protected.

See below for a way to make your own petroglyphs without harming any cultural or natural resources. Choose symbols to communicate a message special to you. Share it with friends and see if they can guess your meaning!
Make Your Own Petroglyph!

Leave your mark by carving your own symbols and designs onto these rocks. Cover the rocks with clear packaging tape or laminating film. Color the rocks with a dark crayon and then use a toothpick to scratch away your petroglyph.
Resources:

Photo gallery of petroglyphs around the world
https://geology.com/articles/petroglyphs/more-petroglyphs.shtml

Petroglyph National Monument - Ancient Puebloan Petroglyph (2:24)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tj4haNMitUQ

National Park Service - Petroglyph National Monument, Albuquerque NM
https://www.nps.gov/petr/learn/historyculture/what.htm

Hands Over Time Curriculum, Petroglyph National Monument
https://www.nps.gov/teachers/classrooms/hands-over-time.htm

Petroglyphs - The Children's Hour podcast
https://www.childrenshour.org/petroglyphs/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=petroglyphs

Exploratorium lesson and information about petroglyphs
https://www.exploratorium.edu/chaco/HTML/TG-petroglyphs.html

Primer on Symbols – Maxwell Museum of Anthropology

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Lulu excited about *Bringing Back the Pack*!