Graded Bedding - Student Activity

Currents of wind and water will carry clasts. The faster a stream flows the larger the clasts it can carry. Examining long rivers such as the Swan or Murchison two things become evident:

1. Clast size decreases from the source to the sea.
2. Each rain or wind driven current surge will also create vertical variation within beds. Beds will be coarser at the base and decrease in clast size upwards as rain or wind current power ceases. This is termed ***graded bedding.***

Your teacher will demonstrate how clast size decreases as the current flow decreases

Materials per student or group

- Glue sticks or glue
- Containers of coarse, medium and fine material.
- Old newspaper to cover work areas.

1. Please remember that the bedding grades upward so no sharp boundaries or gaps should be apparent. Each layer grades into the next.
2. First write up the deposition history of your stream in the right hand column starting at the bottom. There can be several wet seasons or storms.
3. Coat the left hand column with glue and sprinkle grains onto it to represent the story described in your history column. Larger fragments that do not stick to the paper can be drawn.
4. Draw in an arrow pointing to the younger beds and write “WAY UP”

Rock	Descriptive history