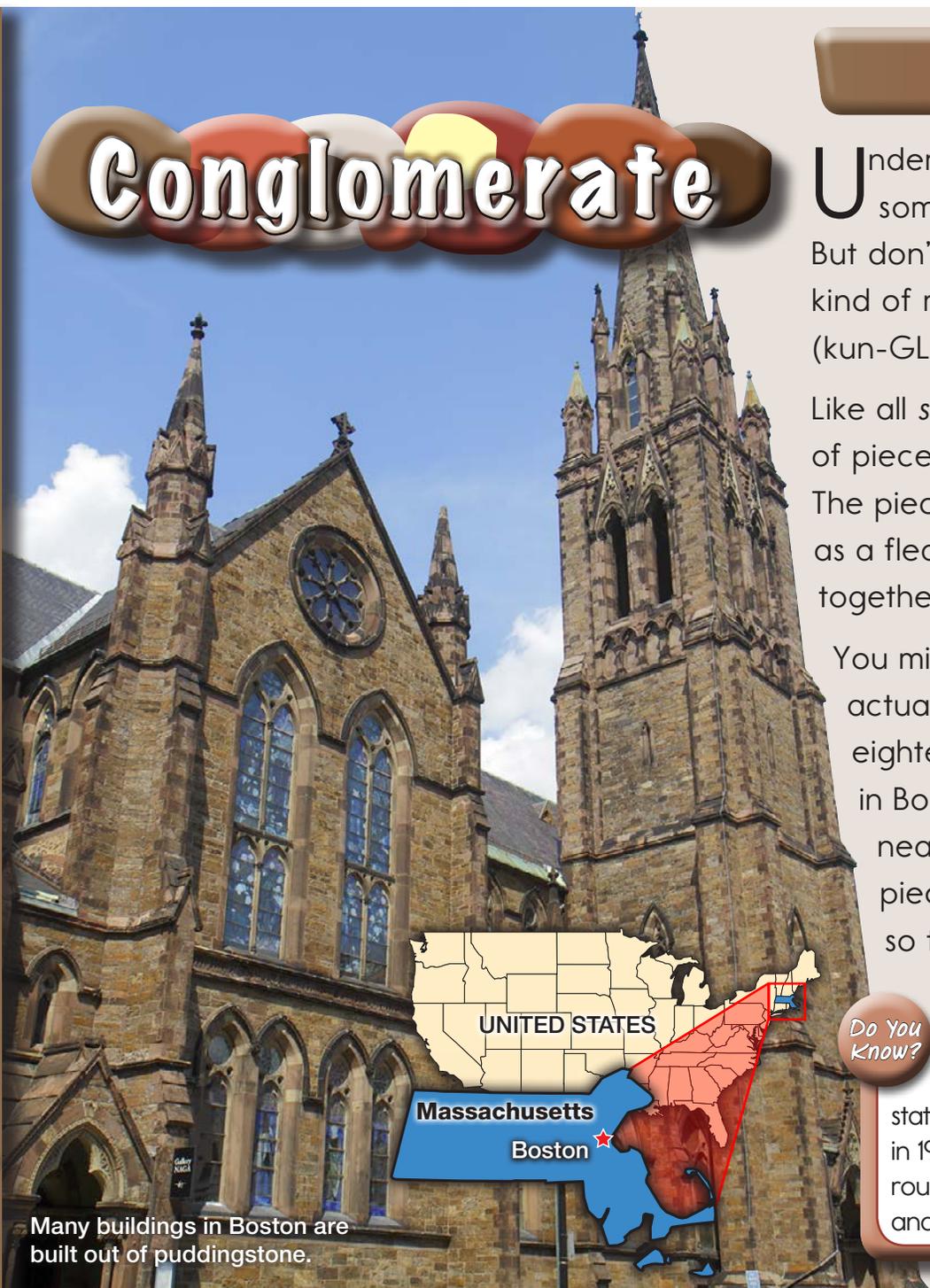


# Conglomerate



Many buildings in Boston are built out of puddingstone.

## ROCKS FOR DESSERT?

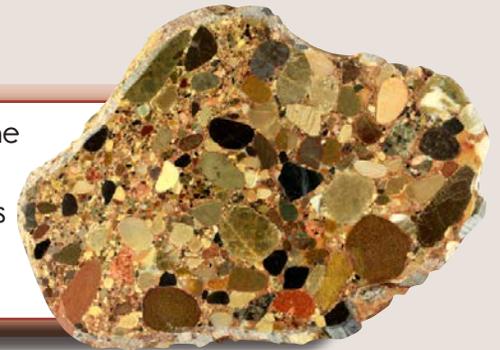
Under the city of Boston, Massachusetts, you'll find something that sounds delicious. It's *puddingstone*! But don't try to eat it—puddingstone isn't food. It's a kind of rock found in nature that's called *conglomerate* (kun-GLOM-er-it).

Like all *sedimentary* rocks, conglomerates are made up of pieces of older rocks and minerals called *sediment*. The pieces of sediment in conglomerate can be as tiny as a flea or as big as a soccer ball! They are stuck together with clay or silt.

You might think this rock is soft, like pudding, but it's actually solid. The rock was given its name in the eighteenth century by British people who had settled in Boston. They noticed big pieces of sediment in the nearby conglomerate. The sediment looked like pieces of fruit in plum pudding—an English dessert—so they called this nonliving material puddingstone.

Do You Know?

Puddingstone became the state rock of Massachusetts in 1983. Puddingstone contains round pieces of older rocks and minerals.



# GRAB BAG OF ROCKS

You might think of conglomerate as a grab bag of rocks. You can find many mixtures hidden inside.

Conglomerate can include pieces of just one kind of rock, such as flint or quartzite. Or it can have pieces of many different kinds of rocks.

You might find pieces of granite, gneiss, and limestone in one sample of conglomerate.

Each rock piece in conglomerate is made up of one or more minerals. Due to *weathering*, the pieces are rounded.

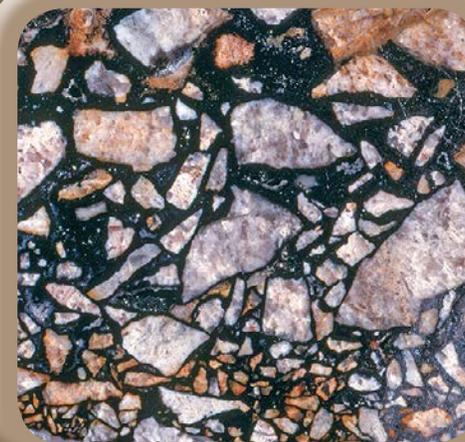
They look like pebbles you might see on a beach.



Conglomerate is made up of rounded pebbles that are stuck together.

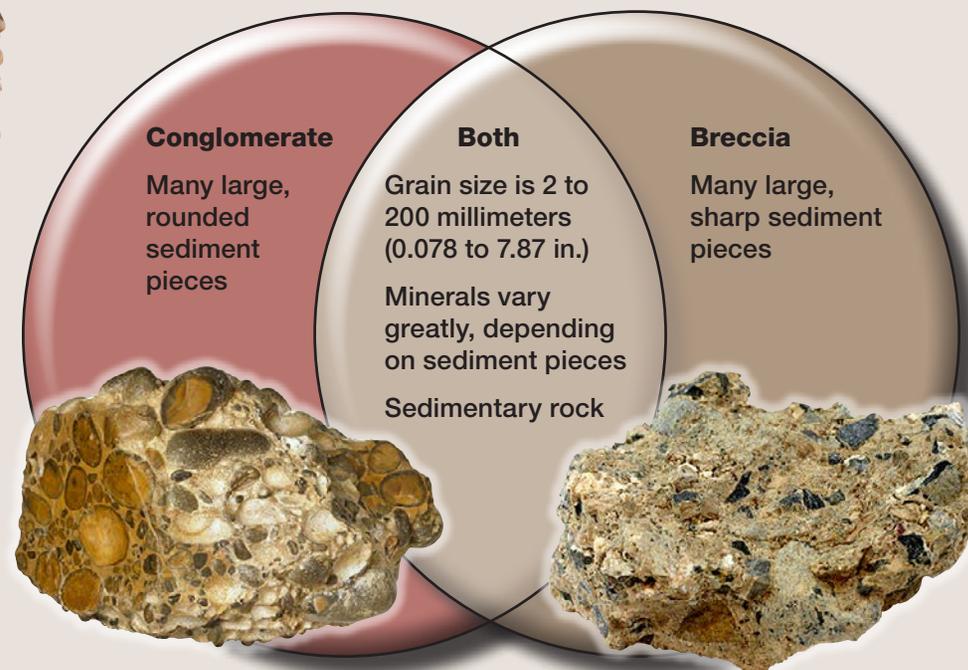
## Math Moment

Elena counted 13 pieces of granite, 9 pieces of limestone, and 11 pieces of gneiss in her sample of conglomerate. What fraction of the total number of pieces does the gneiss make up?



This rock is called *breccia*. It looks like conglomerate, but the rock pieces in it have not had their corners rounded by moving water. A close-up view shows the sharp, jagged pieces.

## COMPARING CONGLOMERATE AND BRECCIA



## Do You Know?

Conglomerate forms from sediment that has been rounded and dropped by fast-flowing rivers, ocean waves, or glaciers. Over time, the sediment becomes buried. It is then pressed together to form solid rock.