What are the differences between igneous rocks commonly used as building stones?

Colour / Colour composition / Grain size	Pale Silicic (silicon-rich)	Intermediate Intermediate	Dark Mafic (iron/ magnesium-rich)	Very dark Ultramafic (very iron/ magnesium-rich) – none included in the selection of building stones
Fine (crystals too small to see, even with a lens): none included in the selection of building stones			Rawd	
Medium (crystals visible, but need a lens to identify them)	Alentejo Granite		Dolerite	
Coarse (crystals easily seen with naked eye	SW England Granite Harmony Granite Rubislaw Granite	Larvikite – Emerald Pearl Larvikite- Blue Pearl	Gabbro	
	Pale with pink feldspar			
	Peninsular Red Granite Shap Granite Rose of Mull Granite Imperial Mahogany Granite Rose Swede Granite Peterhead Granite Rose Purrino Granite Baltic Brown Granite			

This is an activity designed by the Earthlearningidea Team. In this activity students are asked to

- state the evidence which shows that the rocks are of igneous origin (cooled from a melt) and that they are not sedimentary or metamorphic.
- estimate the average grain size (size of the crystals) in each rock
- agree on the criteria by which igneous rocks are distinguished from one another
- judge the best rock to use for a given situation
- express an opinion about the aesthetic value of different rocks.
- consider why igneous rocks are frequently used as building stones.

Resources available from:
http://www.earthlearningidea.com/PDF/137_Building_stones_igneous.pdf