



Family Fun Activities and Investigations

Take a Trip to:

The Maryland Science Center

601 Light Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230
(410-685-5225)

www.marylandsciencecenter.org
(newly opened fossil exhibit)

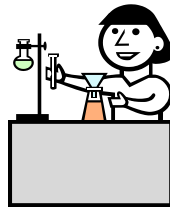
Calvert Cliffs State Park

<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/baylinks/15.html>
(301-872-5688)

Create a Fossil Model

All you will need is a shell, some petroleum jelly, plaster of Paris, and a small aluminum pan. Mix the plaster with water according to directions and pour into the pan. Cover the shell with a thin layer of jelly and push it into the surface of the plaster. Allow the plaster to harden overnight. Remove the shell, and you have an imprint of the shell in the plaster.

Remember, this is *not* a fossil. It is simply a model to show you what a fossil might look like.



Career Connections

Take a few minutes to discuss, with your child, these different career opportunities for people interested in fossils.

Archaeologist

The person who studies the lives of ancient peoples by excavating ancient cities

Biologist

A scientist who deals with the origin, history, characteristics, habits, etc. of plants and animals

Botanist

A scientist who deals with plants and plant life

Anthropologist

A scientist who studies the characteristics and customs of mankind

Museum Curator

A person in charge of a museum

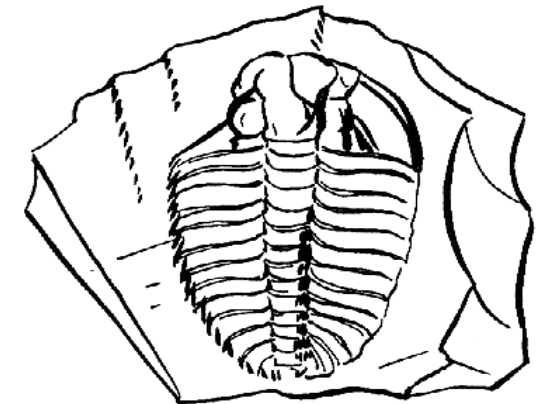
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A Parent's Informational Guide to the Science Unit:

FOSSIL DETECTIVES



Grade 4



Fossil Detectives

Fossil Detectives is a unit designed to teach students that fossils are formed over long periods of time and that scientists use fossils to understand the earth's past. Students will have opportunities to observe, identify, and classify fossils using real fossils as well as models. The Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum Indicators addressed in the unit are listed below:

Scientific Inquiry

Gather information from readings, investigations, and conversations

See that predictions can be tested in an investigation

Identify and demonstrate safety while doing an investigation

Collect, record, and correctly display data from investigations

Compare data using observations, charts, or graphs

Critical Thinking

Describe similarities and differences among objects, materials, and science concepts

Classify objects and materials according to their properties

Provide supporting evidence when solving a practical problem

Applications of Science

Use scientific knowledge to solve science problems

Technology

Recognize and explain that a model can be used to learn something about an object

Recognize and explain ways that tools can be used to collect and communicate scientific information

History of Science

Recognize that people have investigated the world around us, answered scientific questions, and invented things

Earth History

Recognize and explain that fossils provide evidence about the plants and animals that lived long ago and about the nature of the environment at that time

Evolution

Describe how physical structures of plants and animals enable organisms to live in water and land environments



Unit Vocabulary

Encourage your children to use the vocabulary listed below when telling you about what they are learning during this science unit.



fossils - evidence of prehistoric life preserved in rock or some other material.

habitat - an area that provides the needs of an organism



model - a smaller or larger object that represents another object



paleontologist - a scientist who finds and studies fossils to make inferences about prehistoric life



Books to Read

Take some time to read books about fossils with your child. Books on paleontology and fossils can be found in the non-fiction section of the library with the call numbers 560-569. You can also find books on this topic in the children's section of your school and public library.

Fossil by Paul D. Taylor

Fossils by Trudi Strain Trueit

Rocks and Fossils by Chris Pellant

Fossils by Melissa Stewart

The Tales Fossils Tell by Jonathan R. Gallant

Fossils Tell of Long Ago by Aliki

Digging Up Dinosaurs by Aliki

I Can Read About Fossils by John Howard

Internet Sites



<http://www.mgs.md.gov/esic/fs/fs7.html>

<http://www.sdnhm.org/kids/fossils/index.html>

<http://www.fossilguy.com/sites/calvert/index.htm>

<http://www.rom.on.ca/quiz/fossil/fosform.html>

<http://www.fossilweb.com/fwlinksMD.htm>