

3rd Grade

PARENT GUIDE - FOSSILS UNIT



Important Concepts Addressed in this Unit

S3E2. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information on how fossils provide evidence of past organisms.

- a. Construct an argument from observations of fossils (authentic or reproductions) to communicate how they serve as evidence of past organisms and the environments in which they lived.
- b. Develop a model to describe the sequence and conditions required for an organism to become fossilized.

Things to Know

-How different fossils are formed?

- Insects get stuck in sap and the sap hardens.
- A once-living thing breaks down and leaves a mold.
- Mud or minerals fill a mold left behind.
- Animals leave tracks behind in mud. Overtime, they harden and turn into rock.
- Animal parts (teeth, bones, etc.) are left behind and slowly replaced by minerals.

-What can we learn from fossils?

- Where did past organisms live?
- What was the environment like long ago?
- How old are organisms?
- How are organisms from the past like organisms alive today? How are they different?
- What did organisms eat long ago?

-Plant fossils are not as common as animals fossils.

-It is not likely that a scientist will find fur, feathers, or skin when looking for fossils because these things decompose easily.

Words to Know

- fossils
- evidence
- organism
- sequence
- fossilized
- environment
- conditions

3rd Grade

PARENT GUIDE - FOSSILS UNIT



Sample Problems and Testing Tips



What can scientists learn by looking at the picture above? Describe how it might be like leaves today.

***This is a two part question. Be sure to answer all parts to the question. Think about all the questions that fossils answer for us when answering this question.

Which of the following choices are fossils. Circle **ALL** that apply.

- a. A cast of a seashell
- b. A footprint of a dinosaur
- c. A chunk of petrified wood
- d. A bone of an elephant that died yesterday

***Remember to pay close attention to words in bold font such as not, all, best, or number words (two, three, four). Also, read all answer choices carefully. The bone of an elephant can become a fossil, but one that died yesterday would not yet be a fossil.

Describe two ways fossils can be made.

*** Carefully think about what the question is asking. Notice this question is not asking you to name the types of fossils, but instead tell how they are made.

How to Help Your Child at Home

-Websites

<https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/paleontology>

http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/scienceforkids/dinosaurs/fossil_study.htm

-Ask about investigations students completed in class.

-Look over this guide nightly with your child.

3rd Grade

PARENT GUIDE - FOSSILS UNIT

