



Indoors/
Outdoors

AGE RANGE:
3 to 6 years

Episode: What Is Extinct? or "American Dino"

Charlie's Workshop

Dino Dig: Be a Fossil Hunter!

"Extinct!" →



Pretend you are discovering dinosaurs from the imprints they left behind.

Learning Goals

ENGAGE curiosity about fossils by creating "dinosaur bones."
(Life Science)

EXPERIENCE the joy of discovery by searching for, uncovering and identifying a "dinosaur bone" fossil. (Scientific Inquiry)

UNDERSTAND how bones make fossils.
(Life Science)

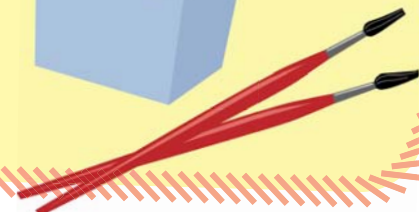


Life Skills

Curiosity: Spark an interest in scientific discovery.

Materials

- Chicken/turkey bones or big plastic dinosaurs or dog bones
- Sand or craft/modeling dough
- Plaster of Paris
- Paper cups or recycled cartons
- Small paint brushes





Directions:

1. **Ask** your child “What do you think **EXTINCT** means?” Let him/her make some suggestions. Extinct means that an animal is no longer living on Earth.
2. **Ask** your child, “How do you think we learn information about extinct animals?” Scientists learn about extinct animals by studying their **BONES**, or fossils, which have been stored in rock or other material in the Earth for a long, long time.
3. **Collect** “dinosaur objects”—dog biscuits, plastic dinosaurs or other animals—to make impressions in the sand or the craft dough.

MAKE A FOSSIL WITH PLASTER OF PARIS



Fill paper cups or recycled cartons about half-way with damp sand. Make sure it’s damp enough to keep an impression.



Press the dinosaur object into the sand. Carefully remove the object.



Have an adult **mix** a small amount of Plaster of Paris with water in a container. The plaster should be stiff but also creamy. Be careful not to breathe the plaster. Stir it with a stick; do not mix it with your hands.



Pour Plaster of Paris into the imprint. Be careful not to let the sand dry too much. It should still hold the impression.



After letting the Plaster of Paris **dry**, about 20 minutes, **peel** or cut the carton or cup away from the sand.

Let the kids **explore** their fossil by brushing the sand away with a paint brush—just like a real fossil hunter, a Paleontologist.

MAKE A FOSSIL IMPRINT WITH CRAFT OR MODELING DOUGH

Use enough craft dough to take the impression of your objects. **Flatten** it until its about one half inch thick.



Press the dinosaur object into the craft dough. Carefully remove the object. Set the craft dough aside until it is dry.

Make many impressions. Let them dry. Mix them up. Have the children try to match up the impression with the original dinosaur objects.





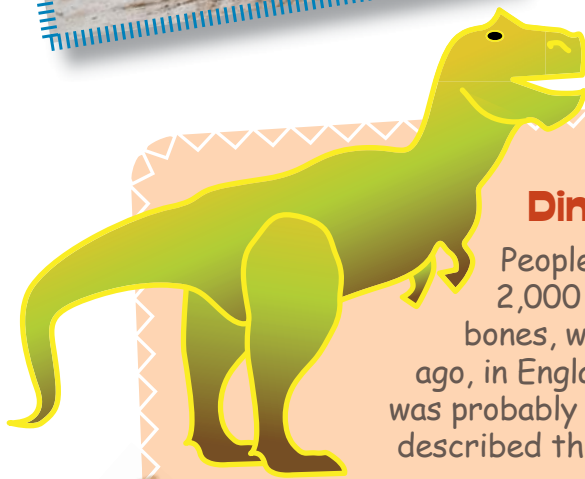
PART 2 - Head OUTSIDE with your Fossils!



Bring the fossils or fossil imprints to your local sandbox. Bury them in a safe, quiet area of the box. Let the children search for the fossils or imprints and brush them off with a paintbrush. Collect them in a shoebox or make your own scientific collection box to store your fossils.



="Yep, I'm Extinct!"



WHEN did people discover Dinosaurs?

People have been finding dinosaur fossils for a long time. Over 2,000 years ago, the Ancient Chinese referred to "dragon" bones, which were probably dinosaur fossils. Four hundred years ago, in England, a man found what he thought was a "giant" bone — it was probably a dinosaur fossil too! William Buckland scientifically described the first dinosaur almost 200 years ago, in 1824.

Did you know that Colorado is the Stegasaurus State?

The Stegosaurus is Colorado's official state fossil. The first Stegosaurus ever found was collected near Morrison, Colorado, just west of Denver.



For Parents/Teachers:

Take your children on a field trip to your local natural history museum to see dinosaur bones reconstructed into a full-size dinosaur. Or, check out Dinosaur Ridge in Morrison, Colorado where you can see actual fossil impressions.

Have fun exploring the different animals that used to roam our planet.

