

Worksheet: What do we learn from fossils?

Intermediate Phase

Grade 4 – 6

Learning area: Natural Sciences

Strand: Life and living

Theme: Biodiversity, change and continuity

Specific Aim 1: Acquiring knowledge of natural sciences

Activity Sheet



Activity 1: Reading and comprehension

Read the article, "Every fossil tells a story" and answer the questions that follow.

Every fossil tells a story

Source: Based on an article written by Pippa Haarhoff

Fossils are the remains or evidence of dead pre-historic animals and plants that have been preserved in rock. Most often the hard, durable parts such as bones, teeth or shells are preserved. However, sometimes wood, animal faeces (called coprolites), animal tracks or the casts of soft body parts may fossilize.

How are fossils made?

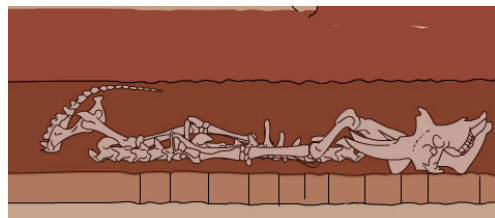
Special conditions are needed for a skeleton to fossilize. Once the living animal dies, the body must become buried under protective layers of mud or sand. As the bone slowly decays, water containing minerals seeps into the bone and replaces the chemicals in the bone with rock-like minerals. The process results in a perfect replica of the original object, called a fossil. The fossil has the same shape as the original object, but is chemically more like a rock!



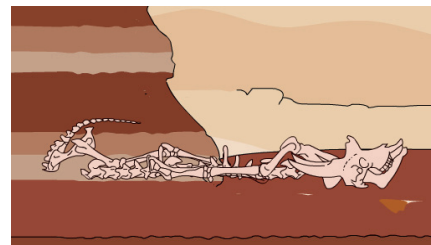
Living animal dies.



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Erosion exposes the fossil.

