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Activities

The Fossil Record

Name: _____ Date: _____

Thanks to fossils, we've learned tons about dinosaurs even though they vanished from Earth 65 million years ago. Fossils don't tell the whole story, but they're a great place to start reconstructing Earth's past. In this Planet Diary activity, you'll explore the fossil record.

Directions

- Start at the Fossil Tour. Watch the dinosaur animation and read the caption. Answer Workspace question 1.
- Click *More* to read *Getting Into the Fossil Record*. Keep clicking *Next* to view the body and trace fossil slide shows. Then answer question 2.
- Continue to Becoming a Fossil. Look at the pictures and read the captions. Click *Next* again to the online question. Then answer questions 3 and 4.
- View Protection from Destruction. Click *Next* to see the fossil photos. Explore each of the photos to learn more. Answer question 5.
- Click *More* and answer the onscreen question. Keep clicking *Next* to learn the difference between soft and hard structures. Use the information to answer the last question.

Workspace

1. Summarize what the dinosaur animation shows.

2. What's the difference between body and trace fossils?

3. Summarize the main steps in fossil formation.

4. Which will be better preserved: An organism buried quickly, or one buried more slowly? Explain your answer.

5. What is *mineralization*?

6. Which are more likely to be preserved, hard or soft structures? Explain your answer.

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