

Fossils: Clues to Life Long Ago

Most people know about dinosaurs, but how do we know what they looked like? One way we learn about dinosaurs is through fossils. Fossils are remains of plants or animals that lived years ago. They give hints about what animals and plants looked like.

Fossils begin to form when a living thing dies. For example, a dinosaur is caught by mud in a lake. It drowns. Its body is weighed down to the bottom of the lake. It slowly rots. Finally, only the bones remain. Mud covers the bones. Over time, the mud around the bones turns to rock. This rock forms a mold around the bones. When the bones rot, they are replaced by minerals that harden. This is how one kind of fossil forms.

When the lake dries up, a fossil can be seen in the dry lake bed.

Someone finds a bone-shaped fossil in the lake bed. The person carefully removes it. The fossil is studied. Fossil experts go to the dry lake. They find the rest of the fossils. They dig them out, and then figure how they fit together. The fossils form the shape of a dinosaur. That's how we learned what dinosaurs looked like.

109

201

Name/Date _____

Teacher/Grade _____

1. MONITOR ORAL READING FLUENCY

To monitor fluency and accuracy, use two copies of the passage, one for you and one for the student. On your copy of the passage, record the student’s oral reading behaviors and the minutes and seconds required for the student to read the entire passage.

Note expression, phrasing, and decoding difficulties.

INTRODUCE THE PASSAGE

Say: *This passage is titled “Fossils: Clues to Life Long Ago.” Read aloud to find out how fossils are formed. You may begin now.*

RATE Use the student’s oral reading time to circle the Words Per Minute (WPM) range. After the assessment, determine and record the student’s exact WPM.

201 (Total Words Read) ÷ _____ total seconds = _____ × 60 = _____ WPM

Rate	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Minutes:Seconds	2:54 or more	2:53–2:02	2:01–1:33	1:32 or less
WPM	69 or fewer	70–99	100–135	136 or more

ACCURACY Circle the number of miscues that are not self-corrected and record the percent of accuracy.

Accuracy	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT		4 ADVANCED	
Number of Miscues	10 or more	8–9	6–7	4–5	1–3	0
Percent of Accuracy	95 or less	96	97	98	99	100

If the student’s percent of accuracy or rate is below the instructional range, reassess with a lower-level passage to determine an instructional reading level.

Check one: _____ Expression and phrasing are appropriate.

_____ Expression and phrasing need attention.

Name/Date _____ Teacher/Grade _____

2. MONITOR COMPREHENSION

Circle the descriptors that best reflect the student’s responses. Possible Independent responses for Sections 2 and 3 are provided. Accept other appropriate responses. The student may use the passage when responding.

SUMMARIZE Important/Main Ideas Say: *What are two important, main ideas about fossils in this passage?* (Possible responses: *Fossils are the remains of ancient animals or plants that lived many years ago. Studying fossils can provide a fossil expert with clues about what ancient animals looked like.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Summarize: Main Ideas	Does not identify main ideas or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies 1 of 2 main ideas	Identifies 2 main ideas	Identifies 2 main ideas with details using specific vocabulary from the text

SUMMARIZE Details Say: *What are two details about how fossils form?* (Possible responses: *An animal dies, and it rots until only bones remain. Mud covers the bones, and the mud and bones turn into rock. The rock forms a mold. Minerals replace the bone as it rots away.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Summarize: Details	Identifies no details from the passage or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies 1 of 2 details; may misinterpret information	Identifies 2 details	Identifies 2 details using specific vocabulary from the text

Name/Date _____

Teacher/Grade _____

3. IN-DEPTH PROGRESS MONITORING

The items below provide more in-depth progress monitoring of specific skills. The student may use the passage when responding.

COMPREHENSION Draw Conclusions

- Say: *If you held a fossil in your hand, how do you think it would feel?* (Possible responses: *A fossil would feel rough. It would feel hard, like a rock.*)
- Say: *Would we know what dinosaurs looked like without fossils?* (Possible response: *No; we learned how dinosaurs looked by fitting bones together.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Draw Conclusions	Does not draw a conclusion or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as draws 1 conclusion	Draws 2 reasonable conclusions using information from the text	Draws 2 reasonable conclusions using information and specific vocabulary from the text

- End the conference.

VOCABULARY Multiple-Meaning Words

- Point to the word *plants* in the first paragraph. Say: *What does the word plants mean in this passage?* (Possible response: *living things*) *What is another meaning for the word plants?* (Possible response: *buildings used in manufacturing products*)
- Point to the word *remains* in the first paragraph. Say: *What does the word remains mean in this passage?* (Possible response: *what is left of something that is dead*) *What is another meaning for the word remains?* (Possible response: *stays in place*)

Vocabulary	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Multiple-Meaning Words	Gives inaccurate meanings or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as the intended meaning of 1 word	Gives the intended meaning of each word	Gives the intended meaning and an additional meaning for each word

- End the conference.

WORD READING Less Common Vowel Patterns *ough*, *ough*, *eigh* Return to the Record of Oral Reading to determine whether the student read these words correctly: *caught*, *through*, *weighed*.

Word Reading	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Less Common Vowel Patterns: <i>ough</i> , <i>ough</i> , <i>eigh</i>	Does not read any words accurately or omits them	Reads 1–2 of 3 words accurately	Reads all 3 words accurately	Reads all 3 words accurately and automatically