



Dinosaur Discovery — Lesson Plan

Grade: Pre-K–2 | Duration: 40–50 minutes | CASEL Domain: Responsible Decision-Making

Objective: Students will practice careful observation and patience through paleontology-inspired activities and learn that curiosity connects us to the past.

Essential Question: *"What secrets are buried right beneath your feet?"*

Materials: The personalized story, Sand or soil tray with hidden "fossils" (shells, bones), Paintbrushes for excavation, Paper and crayons

Vocabulary: Fossil, Dinosaur, Paleontologist, Prehistoric, Excavate, Discover, Ancient, Footprint, Skeleton, Extinct

ANTICIPATORY SET (5 MIN)

Hold up a rock. Ask: "What if this rock was millions of years old? What if it was once part of a dinosaur? How would we find out?" Discuss how paleontologists work.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION (15 MIN)

Read aloud. Pause at the fossil dig — emphasize patience. Pause at the T-Rex — discuss expectations vs. reality. Emphasize: careful observation and curiosity are a scientist's best tools.

GUIDED PRACTICE (10 MIN)

Fossil Dig Site: excavate hidden objects with paintbrushes. Record findings in field journals. Practice: slow, careful, curious.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (10 MIN)

Design a new dinosaur species with a name, habitat, and one surprising fact. Display in a class "museum."

CLOSURE (5 MIN)

Museum walk: view each other's dinosaurs. Share: "One thing I discovered by being patient today was ____."

ASSESSMENT

Observe patience during fossil dig. Review dinosaur designs and field journals. Exit ticket: "Why do paleontologists work slowly and carefully?"

DIFFERENTIATION

Support: Provide dinosaur fact cards. Pre-dig some fossils partially. Pair students at dig site.

Extend: Research a real dinosaur. Write a "Dino Discovery Report" and present to the class.

HOME CONNECTION

Send home a fossil hunt checklist. Families search their neighborhood for interesting rocks and natural objects.