

# My Journey Home Family Connection

This week your child is reading *Fossils: A Peek Into the Past*, an informational selection about young people who found fossils practically in their own backyards.

DAY  
1

**Vocabulary on the Go** The young fossil finder Jared Post was amazed to think that mammoths once walked around his neighborhood. Take a walk with your child and discuss what your area might have looked like when mammoths walked the Earth over 10,000 years ago. Try to use some of these words as you talk about your neighborhood.

**previously   legendary   surveyed   advantages   aspects**

DAY  
2

**Dinosaur Facts** With your child, look through a website or an illustrated book about dinosaurs. Learn information about several dinosaurs. Then take turns giving opinions about which one is the most unusual and unique. Support your opinions with several of the facts you learned.

Work with your child to make dinosaur trading cards. Illustrate the front of each card with a picture of a dinosaur. Then write the facts you learned about it on the back.

**CHALLENGE**

DAY  
3

**Toothy Topics** Fossilized teeth help scientists determine what an extinct creature ate. Discuss the different kinds of teeth in your mouths. How do different teeth help you eat different kinds of foods?

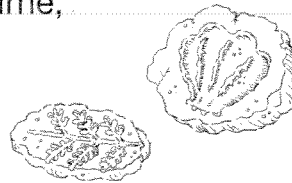
**Making Fossils** Read these directions together, and then make some “fossils.” How closely do the fossils resemble the actual items?

### Homemade Fossils

#### What You'll Need

- clean, outdoor soil
- water
- spoon and bowl
- baking sheet
- items to “fossilize” (small shells, acorns, bones)

1. In the bowl, mix the soil with water, a little at a time, until you have a clay-like mud.
2. Make a large mud ball. Push an item into it.
3. Flatten the ball into a disk about 1-inch thick, keeping the item completely covered with mud.
4. Place the disk on the baking sheet. Repeat with other items.
5. Let the disks dry in a sunny place. When completely dry, break them open with your hands. Gently remove the “fossils.”



**What's in a Name?** Scientists named the fossil remains of ancient creatures using Greek and Latin word parts. Together, use a dictionary or an online resource to find the original sources of words such as *fossil*, *dinosaur*, *reptile*, or *Tyrannosaurus rex*. How do the original word parts relate to the descriptions of the creatures or objects?



#### Book Links

- *The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins*, by Barbara Kerley
- *With a Little Luck*, by Dennis B. Fradin **CHALLENGE**



**Internet Challenge** When did the Ice Age take place? What makes the Jurassic Era different from the Cretaceous? Together, search the Internet to find out how scientists classify different time periods.

**Fossils: A Peek  
Into the Past**  
Home Letter

# Home Letter

## Dear Family,

Throughout the week, students will be reading selections about a kind of detective work. We will be thinking about answers to “How does the study of fossils relate to our everyday lives?” In the main selection, **Fossils: A Peek Into the Past**, we will read about young fossil discoverers and their finds. **Trapped in Tar!** describes a different kind of fossil field. In this informational text selection, students will get a glimpse of California’s La Brea Tar Pits. Finally, students will enjoy the poetry selections **Journey of the Woolly Mammoth** and **Fossils**.

### This week’s...

**Target Vocabulary:** viewpoint, surveyed, advantages, previously, legendary, retreat, persuade, aspects, rural, organize

**Vocabulary Strategy:** Idioms (adages and common sayings)

**Comprehension Skill:** Fact and opinion—decide whether an idea can be proved, or is a feeling or belief

**Comprehension Strategy:** Question—ask questions about a selection before you read, as you read, and after you read

**Writing Focus:** Informative writing—summary

## Activities to Do Together

### Vocabulary

After reviewing the **Target Vocabulary**, have your child answer questions with sentences that show what the words mean. For example, you might ask your child: “Give me your **viewpoint** on becoming an archaeologist” or “Name a **rural** area near us.”

### Museum Visit

Fossils are fun to find and look at. If possible, take your child to search for fossils or take a virtual museum tour online. Talk with your child about what you found or saw.

### Sum It Up

Discuss with your child the importance of studying fossils, including what kinds of things we can learn from them. Then ask your child to write a summary of your discussion.



Go to the *eBook* to read and listen to this week’s selection.

## Fossils: A Peek Into the Past

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. telephone    | 22. bibliography  |
| 2. autograph    | 23. phonetic      |
| 3. microscope   | 24. microbe       |
| 4. photograph   | 25. autobiography |
| 5. televise     |                   |
| 6. biology      |                   |
| 7. microphone   |                   |
| 8. paragraph    |                   |
| 9. symphony     |                   |
| 10. telegraph   |                   |
| 11. megaphone   |                   |
| 12. microwave   |                   |
| 13. photocopy   |                   |
| 14. biography   |                   |
| 15. saxophone   |                   |
| 16. telescope   |                   |
| 17. calligraphy |                   |
| 18. xylophone   |                   |
| 19. homophone   |                   |
| 20. homograph   |                   |
| 21. telecommute |                   |

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Fossils: A Peek Into  
the Past**

Vocabulary Word Cards

**viewpoint**

**retreat**

**surveyed**

**persuade**

**advantages**

**aspects**

**previously**

**rural**

**legendary**

**organize**