Excavating Dinosaurs

Program Summary

Grades: 2 - 5

Duration: 45 minutes

Program Description:

The field of paleontology is incredibly fascinating for students of all ages! In this program, we'll explore the science behind how fossils are formed and then discuss how paleontologists go about finding them in the field. Students will have the opportunity to observe actual fossil preparation in our lab while discussing dinosaurs with real paleontologists, and get a behind the scenes look at our collections area.

This program will take place on Zoom. It is designed to be a collaborative lesson between the students and the museum facilitator. We ask that your students be split into small groups for some of the activities. A week prior to your field trip, you will receive a teacher packet with information, as well as worksheets to make copies of.

Activities:

- Students will play a game based on fossil formation.
- Students will participate in discussions around the tools of paleontology.
- Students will be able to talk with a paleontologist.

Program Goals:

- Students will gain exposure to the real work profession of paleontology and field work.
- Students will be able to discuss the field of paleontology with museum professionals.
- Students will work together collaboratively with each other as well as the instructor to solve problems and develop ideas.

Learning Targets:

Students Will:

- Learn about working in the field of paleontology.
- Understand the process by which something becomes fossilized.
- Learn how we can use fossils to help us learn about the history of life on our planet.
- Understand how paleontologists look for and discover fossil sites.
- Be able to recognize different tools used by paleontologists and what they are used for in the field.

Learning Standards

Wisconsin Science Standards:

- SCI.CC1.3-5 Students identify similarities and differences in order to sort and classify natural objects and designed products. They identify patterns related to time, including simple rates of change and cycles, and use these patterns to make predictions.
- SCI.LS4.A.3 Some living organisms resemble organisms that once lived on Earth. Fossils provide evidence about the types of organisms and environments that existed long ago.
- SCI.ESS1.C.2 Some events on Earth occur very quickly; others can occur very slowly.

Next Generation Science Standards:

- 2-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity. Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.
- 3-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity. Analyze and interpret data from fossils to provide evidence of the organisms and the environments in which they lived long ago.
- 4-ESS1-1 Earth's Place in the Universe. Identify evidence from patterns in rock formations and fossils in rock layers to support an explanation for changes in a landscape over time.

Contact Information

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