

Fossils and Our Past (Cookie Dig)

3rd Grade

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1. References

Columbus Public Schools Third Grade Curriculum Guide, January 2005 Printing, Grade 3 Life Science (Grading Period 2) Pages 15-17.

2. Benchmarks

GLI LS-4 – Use examples to explain that extinct organisms may resemble organisms that are alive today.

GLI LS-5 – Observe and explore how fossils provide evidence about animals that lived long ago and the nature of the environment at that time.

GLI LS-6 – Describe how changes in an organisms' habitat are sometimes beneficial and sometimes harmful.

3. Objectives

Students will be able to discern the difference between cast and mold fossils.

4. Materials

- Book, "Fossils Tell of Long Ago"
- Box
- Sand
- Shovels
- Chocolate Chip Cookies (Several placed in box surrounded by sand)
- Paintbrushes
- Toothpicks
- Napkins

5. Demonstration

Read book, "Fossils Tell of Long Ago" by Alikei, with students. Discuss different types of fossils and where they are found.

6. Target Objectives

- Fossils tell about the past.
- Fossils can tell about the climate of an area long ago and can tell about strange creatures.
- Have students learn about cast (filled in imprints) and mold (imprints) fossils.

- Amber is ancient tree sap that has hardened and trapped some animals intact to encapsulate them as fossils.

7. Target Model

- Fossils can tell many interesting things about the past.
- There are different types of fossils that result from different processes.

8. Procedure

Have the cookie dig set up with several cookies, one per pair of students or one per student, buried in a sand box. Call students up a few at a time to dig for fossils. Once a student or pair of students finds a fossil, have them take it back to their seats to brush off the sand with paintbrushes and dig out the tiny fossils, chocolate chips, with the toothpicks. Once this is done, open the floor for discussion about the types of fossils they found.

Be certain to tell the students not to eat their fossils. Hand out a fresh cookie for each student and review vocabulary terms from the list in the curriculum guide (page 12 and 13 of the handout section).

9. Target Revised Model

- Yet to be determined

10. Summary

This lesson will utilize something most children love, namely cookies, to introduce cast and mold fossils. The concept of fossils will be introduced through vocabulary words and reading a grade appropriate book. The lesson's ultimate goal is to have the students be paleontologists and find their own fossils.