

Name: _____

Date: _____

Finding a fossil is fun, and so is making one. Read the directions on how to do it and then answer the questions that follow.

Activity: Make Your Own Fossil

Finding a real fossil is terrific! Fossils are rocks that contain the imprint of bones, shells, or leaves that existed thousands—maybe even millions—of years ago. You may not find a real fossil very often—or ever. But you can make your own fossil. Here are directions for making your own fossil.

You will need:

- 1 small bag of plaster of Paris (ask at a hardware store)
- Water
- 1 empty coffee can
- 1 old aluminum pie or cake pan
- Something to stir with (like a paint-stirring stick)
- Some small objects to press into your fossil (shells, leaves, stones, buttons, bottle caps, even your hand will do)
- A piece of picture-hanging wire (if you want to hang your fossil on the wall)
- A cup

How to do it:

1. Spread newspapers on the floor or table where you are going to work. (This can get messy!)
2. Collect your "fossil objects."
3. Pour a cup of plaster of Paris into the coffee can.
4. Stir in enough water until it looks like thick pancake batter, following the directions on the box.
5. Pour the plaster of Paris mixture into the aluminum pan.
6. Place your fossil objects on the plaster and press down firmly.
7. If you want to hang your fossil on the wall when it's dry, twist a piece of wire into a loop and stick it into the top of the mold.
8. Wait 5 minutes, then carefully remove the objects.
9. Let the plaster dry, remove it from the pan, and **YOU HAVE MADE A FOSSIL!!**

If you can't get plaster of Paris, you can also make a fossil with clay.

1. What word in the story means the same as *take out*?

- A. twist
- B. hang
- C. place
- D. remove

2. The word *imprint* from the first paragraph means

- A. shape.
 - B. pieces.
 - C. color.
 - D. stones.
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3. Which would NOT be good to use to make a fossil?

- A. a chicken feather
 - B. dead leaf
 - C. a piece of paper
 - D. fish bones
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4. Someone might read this story to

- A. find a project for science class.
 - B. learn how to make plaster of Paris.
 - C. discover where to look for fossils.
 - D. find out how fossils form in nature.
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5. When making a fossil, the coffee can is used to

- A. wash the pie pan.
 - B. pour the water.
 - C. hold the fossil objects you collect.
 - D. mix the plaster of Paris.
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6. What should you do FIRST when you make your own fossil?

- A. pour the plaster of Paris mixture into the pan
 - B. put a loop of wire into the plaster of Paris
 - C. press objects into the plaster of Paris
 - D. spread newspapers on the floor
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7. What can you use in place of plaster of Paris to make a fossil?

- A. flour
 - B. glue
 - C. clay
 - D. sugar
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8. You must remove the "fossil objects" 5 minutes after you put them in place. If you do not do so, what will happen?

- A. They will not leave an imprint.
 - B. The plaster of Paris will not get hard.
 - C. They will get stuck in the hard plaster.
 - D. They will sink into the plaster.
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9. The writer gives step 4 to tell how

- A. thick the plaster of Paris must be.
 - B. long to stir the mixture.
 - C. much plaster of Paris to use.
 - D. to make pancake batter.
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10.

Use the dictionary entry below to answer this question.

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| <p>watch (wɒtʃ) <i>v.</i> 1. to observe, regard, look at, pay attention to. <i>v.</i> 2. look after, care for, protect, supervise. <i>n.</i> 3. clock, timepiece, pocket watch, wristwatch. <i>n.</i> 4. sentry, security guard, lookout, caretaker.</p> |
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Which meaning of *watch* is used in the sentence below?

Anita looked at the watch she wore on a chain around her neck.

- A. meaning 1
- B. meaning 2
- C. meaning 3
- D. meaning 4

Answer Key

1. D) remove
2. A) shape.
3. C) a piece of paper
4. A) find a project for science class.
5. D) mix the plaster of Paris.
6. D) spread newspapers on the floor
7. C) clay
8. C) They will get stuck in the hard plaster.
9. A) thick the plaster of Paris must be.
10. C) meaning 3