

Biological Evolution: Fossil Evidence

Grade 3 Science • Fossils as Evidence of the Past

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Learning Target: I can use fossil evidence to explain what organisms and environments were like long ago.

1 What is a fossil?

Circle the best answer.

☐

A living animal

☐

The remains or traces of living things from long ago

☐

A new kind of rock

☐

A weather pattern

2 What does a paleontologist do?

Write one sentence.

3 Scientists find a fish fossil in dry, rocky land. What can this fossil tell scientists about this place long ago?

Use the fossil as evidence.

Explain your thinking.

THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST

A fish needs water to live.

The fossil was found in rocks on dry land today.

4 Why are rock layers useful when scientists study fossils?

Choose the best answer.

☐

They show today's weather.

☐

They help scientists learn about when fossils lived.

☐

They make animals come alive.

☐

They tell scientists what an animal will eat tomorrow.

5 An animal fossil has many sharp, pointed teeth. What can scientists infer?

Circle the best answer and explain why.

☐

It was probably a carnivore.

☐

It was probably a herbivore.

SCIENCE INVESTIGATION

Use Evidence to Explain the Past

Read each situation carefully. Scientists use fossil evidence to make claims about organisms and environments from long ago.

6

An animal fossil has flat, dull teeth. What can scientists infer about what it ate?

Write your answer and give one reason.



7

What is the fossil record?

Circle the best answer.

- A. A list of animals living today
- B. Information about fossils found by scientists
- C. A map of today's oceans
- D. A book about weather

8

Scientists find fossils of sea animals in a desert. What is the best conclusion?

Explain how the fossil evidence supports your answer.

- A. The animals lived in the desert.
- B. The area may have been covered by water long ago.

9

How can climate change cause extinction?

Complete the sentence and explain your answer.

REMEMBER

Different organisms need different climate conditions to survive. Some organisms cannot survive when their environment changes.

10

Evidence Challenge

Make a claim and use the evidence to support it.

FOSSIL EVIDENCE

Scientists find many fossilized tree trunks on the floor of an area that is now covered by ocean water. What kind of environment might have been there long ago?

MY CLAIM

MY EVIDENCE

MY REASONING

+

Scientist Reflection

What is one thing fossils can tell us about Earth's past?

