



Name _____ Date _____

FOSSILS

Have you ever seen a fossil in rocks buried in the earth? It's like finding a treasure. Fossils are remains of plants and animals that lived a very long time ago. For example, any dinosaur fossil that is found is at least 65 million years old.

Fossils tell stories about the past. Many of these stories are surprising. For example, fossils of sea life have been found as high up as the top of Mount Everest. This means that at one point, the rocks in Mt. Everest were probably under water. Fossils from plants in the rain forest have been buried deep in the ice of the South Pole.

The oldest known fossil is a tiny bacterium. These fossils have been found in Southern Africa. These fossils are said to be as old as 3.5 billion years.

How are fossils formed? Bones and plant remains begin to decay with time. But sometimes, the bones and plant remains are covered with mud or sand. This makes it possible for the soft parts to decay, while the harder parts (such as wood, bones, and teeth) last a lot longer. Eventually, these hard parts become hardened or petrified.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the word *petrified* as used in the passage?
 - a. scared
 - b. stiff
 - c. excitable
 - d. rotten
2. What is the purpose of the third paragraph?
 - a. to explain how fossils are formed
 - b. to mention the oldest fossil found
 - c. to explain how fossils are found
 - d. to explain what happens to fossils after they are found
3. Which paragraph would you read to find out about unusual places that fossils have been found?
 - a. first paragraph
 - b. third paragraph
 - c. fourth paragraph
 - d. second paragraph
4. Which sentence explains how fossils begin to be formed?
 - a. Fossils tell stories about the past.
 - b. Fossils are remains of plants and animals that lived a very long time ago.
 - c. But sometimes, the bones and plant remains are covered with mud or sand.
 - d. Fossils from plants in the rain forest have been buried deep in the ice of the South Pole.



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LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE

The Earth is a very large surface, and at times it is very hard to explain exactly where you are. There are two types of directions that can be used. The first type is absolute direction. Absolute direction is when you are given a specific address of a location, such as a street address. The other type of direction is relative. Relative direction uses imaginary lines called latitude and longitude lines to explain location. These imaginary lines run from north to south and east to west across the Earth.

Latitude lines run east to west. These lines are used to tell you how far north or south you are from the equator. The equator is the imaginary line that runs horizontally along the center of the Earth. It is the exact midpoint between the North and South Poles.

Latitude lines are also called parallels because they go around the Earth without ever crossing or intersecting. They are numbered from 0 to 90 degrees. Zero degrees is found at the equator. The North Pole is 90 degrees north and the South Pole is 90 degrees south.

There are other imaginary lines that run north to south. These imaginary lines are called longitudinal lines. The very center line that runs through the North and South poles is called the prime meridian. The prime meridian divides the globe into two half circles called the Eastern and Western hemispheres. Lines of longitude are also called meridian lines. Lines of latitude and longitude can help you find your location and place on this earth.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What would be the best title for this passage?
 - a. "Parallel Lines"
 - b. "Imaginary Lines of Direction"
 - c. "How Latitude Lines Work"
 - d. "Eastern and Western Hemisphere"
2. Which of the following is not a fact about latitude lines?
 - a. Latitude lines are also called parallels.
 - b. Latitude lines run east to west.
 - c. Latitude lines divide the Earth into two hemispheres.
 - d. Latitude lines run north and south of the equator.
3. Lines of latitude and longitude help you determine which type of direction?
 - a. relative
 - b. absolute
 - c. direct
 - d. none of the above



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DESERT LIFE

Living in the desert usually means extreme heat and dry, arid conditions. There are different types of deserts. Some deserts have more plant life than other deserts. The largest desert in the world is the Sahara Desert. This desert covers over a million square miles of land.

Like all deserts, the Sahara has very little vegetation. However, there are some plants that have learned to grow without very much rain. Cacti are examples of plants that can live for almost a year without rain. When a cactus does receive rain, it produces beautiful and striking flowers.

Many of the animals that live in the desert are the same color as the environment. These sand-colored animals often burrow into the sand to avoid the extreme heat. Many of these animals are nocturnal animals, which means they feed and are active mostly during the night. When there is a severe drought, many of these animals sleep to save water and their need for food.

Camels are another type of animal commonly found in the Sahara Desert. The camel is able to go for a week without any drinking water. The camel's hump serves as food storage. A camel will drink up to 16 gallons of water at one time.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why are desert animals nocturnal?
 - a. The sun is too bright during the day.
 - b. They are trying to avoid the extreme heat.
 - c. The water comes at night.
 - d. They are able to move faster.
2. According to the passage, why are camels good animals for working in the desert?
 - a. There is no specific reason listed.
 - b. They work together to help each other in extremely hot conditions.
 - c. They are able to store food and water and go without water for a long time.
 - d. They have always been used in the desert.
3. What is the main idea of the passage?
 - a. to show how camels store food and water
 - b. to list the types of animals found in the desert
 - c. to explain what plant life and animal life is like in the desert
 - d. to show how cacti can survive a drought
4. What do animals that live in the desert have in common?
 - a. They are all reptiles.
 - b. They are all nocturnal animals.
 - c. They have learned to adapt to the heat.
 - d. They are brightly-colored animals.