

Overview:

Students discuss animals that lived in the past. They measure how large dinosaurs were and create a model out of dough or clay.

Objectives:

The student will:

- measure dinosaurs; and
- create a model of a dinosaur.

Targeted Alaska Grade Level Expectations:

Science

- [3] SC1.2 The student demonstrates an understanding of how science explains changes in life forms over time, including genetics, heredity, the processes of natural selection, and biological evolution by describing how some traits (e.g., claws, teeth, camouflage) of living organisms have helped them survive as a species.
- [3] SA2.1 The student demonstrates an understanding of the attitudes and approaches to scientific inquiry by answering “how do you know?” questions with reasonable answers.

Vocabulary:

fossil – the hardened remains or traces of a plant or animal that lived long ago. Fossils are often found in sedimentary rocks

extinct – no longer existing or living

survive – to remain alive or in existence

Materials:

- *Fossils Tell of Long Ago* by Aliki
- Clay or dough (enough for each student to have an amount the size of a baseball)
- 6-8 meter sticks
- 6-8 measuring tapes
- Roll of string (one per group)
- Science journal

Activity Preparation:

1. Choose six to eight dinosaurs and their actual sizes to list on the board during the activity.

Activity Procedure:

1. Draw a large picture of a dinosaur on the board while students are seated on the floor. Ask students to tell what they know about animals and plants that lived in the past. List the responses on the dinosaur drawing.
2. Read the book *Fossils Tell of Long Ago* and discuss the story. Ask students: How do we know that animals lived long ago? What kind of animals lived long ago? Why are they extinct? What kind of plants lived long ago? What type of plants and animals today look like plants and animals that lived long ago? Ask for any ideas they want to add to the picture of the dinosaur.
3. Tell students that they will be measuring how big some dinosaurs were. List a variety of dinosaurs with their size in meters on the board.
3. Have students work in small groups. They should choose a dinosaur to measure. They should go somewhere in the classroom or hallway and tape a piece of string where they begin to measure with a meter stick or

measuring tape, and put a piece of tape where they end. (If the dinosaur is 10 meters the tape should be at zero and 10 meters).

4. When all groups have completed measuring, they should compare their strings. Have students lay next to the strings to see how many students would be the size of a dinosaur. Ask students: what other tool could you measure with? What else could you use to compare to the size of dinosaurs?
5. In the science journals, have each student draw and write about measuring a dinosaur. They should include the name of the dinosaur and its actual size.
6. Give each student clay or dough to create a model of the dinosaur they measured. Display the finished dinosaurs in the classroom.

Extension Ideas:

1. Choose their favorite dinosaur and role play how it acted in real life.
2. Illustrate their favorite dinosaur. Include the habitat it lived in.
3. Write a short story from the perspective of a dinosaur that lived long ago.
4. Draw how the students think animals of long ago became extinct.
5. Invite other classrooms or parents in to view the models of the dinosaurs.
6. Read the following books aloud: *Jurassic Poop: What Dinosaurs (and Others) Left Behind* by Jacob Berkowitz, *The Magic School Bus in the Time of the Dinosaurs* by Joanna Cole, *A Woolly Mammoth's Journey* by Debbie Miller, *My Visit to the Dinosaurs* by Alike, *Archaeologists Dig For Clues* by Katie Duke, *Digging Up Dinosaurs* by Alike, and *Dinosaurs Are Different* by Alike.

References:

Houghton Mifflin Company. (2003). *The American heritage children's science dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
The American heritage college dictionary. (1993). Boston, Mass. [u.a.: Houghton Mifflin.