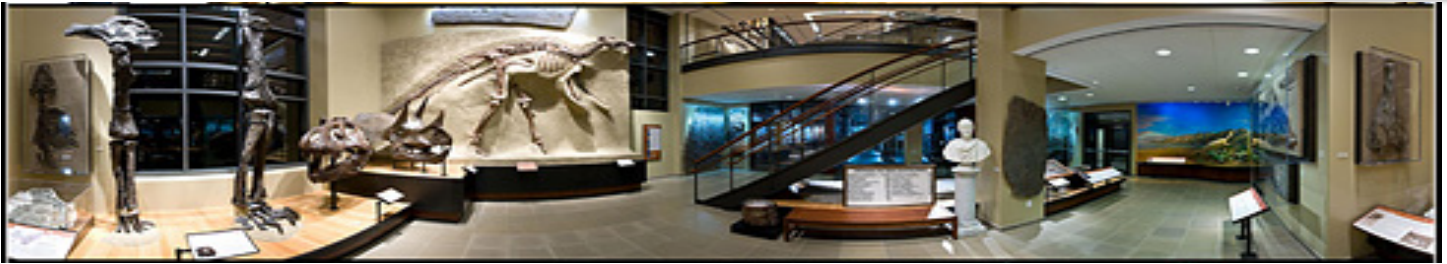


Amherst College

Fossil Discovery

Hints for Teachers Kindergarten



MUSEUM INFORMATION:

The "Fossil Discovery" activity guide is designed for students to practice scientific inquiry to be used in the Beneski Museum of Natural History in conjunction with the classroom curriculum; however, it can also be used independently.

- The Beneski Museum of Natural History displays the fossil remains of many different creatures throughout different periods of time.
- While exploring the exhibition, encourage your students to look above their heads to see specimens displayed at different levels of the museum.
- The Beneski Museum of Natural History can accommodate up to 45 children and chaperones at a time. Please consider splitting into smaller sub-groups when completing the activity.
- When your students arrive at the museum, they will be given a brief greeting by a museum staff member. After this greeting is a good time for you to talk to your students and chaperones about the "Fossil Discovery" activity.

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge and thank the staff of the following organizations for permitting us to share some of the best lab and field guide materials created for use in the Beneski Museum of Natural History.

- Amherst Public Schools
- Brown University
- Four Rivers Charter School
- Greenfield Community College
- Holyoke Community College
- McAuliffe Regional CPS
- Mount Holyoke College
- Northampton Montessori School
- Northampton Public Schools
- Smith College
- University of Massachusetts
- Williamsburg Schools

Grades K1

Concepts

- Fossils come in many shapes and sizes.
- Fossils can be both animals and plants.

Objectives

- Students will compare different animals in the Museum.
- Students will identify observable characteristics of fossil animals and plants.

Outline

1. We can describe animals in many ways: their relative size, how many legs they have, and by their external features. Review these characteristics with students.
2. Students can use any fossil animals or plants in the Museum to complete the scavenger hunt.

Duration

20-30 minutes

Location

Beneski Museum

Supplies

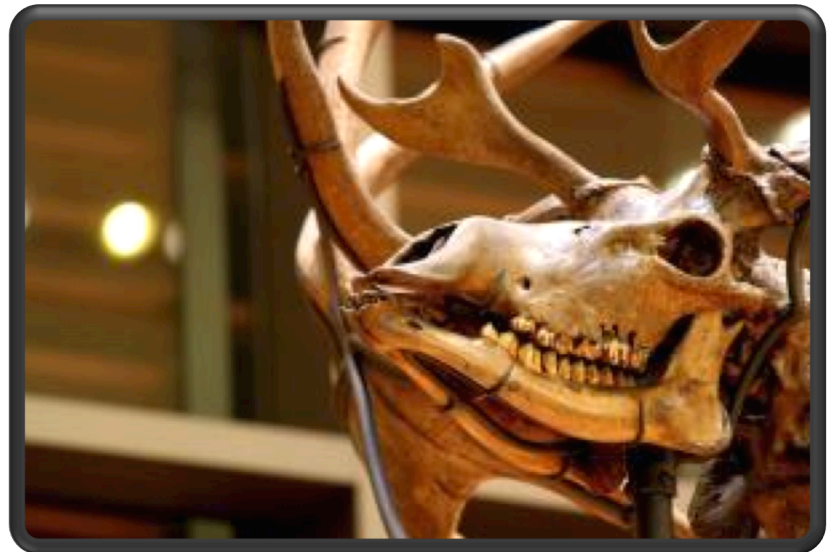
- Worksheet
- Pencil
- Clipboard (optional)

Standards Science K

Life Sciences
Investigation and
Experimentation

Vocabulary

Fossil
Characteristics
Observation
Wings



Pre-Visit



Goals

- Students have realistic expectations about what they will see and do at the museum
- Students understand the goals for learning at the Museum
- Students understand how the field trip fits into classroom learning
- Students complete activities that prepare them for learning at the Museum

- At the Museum, students will be asked to identify fossil animals that are larger, smaller, and the same size as they are. Have students point out various objects in the classroom that fit these descriptions.
- Students will also be asked to identify the external features of animals and plants. Review the common structures of plants and animals if necessary before your visit.
- Students will be asked to identify a fossil inside the Museum that is not an animal. Review the observable differences between animals and plants before your visit.

Museum Visit



Goals

- Students thoughtfully engage with Museum resources through focused activities
- Students meet the trip's learning objectives.
- Students build on learning started during pre-field trip activities
- Students have fun learning

- At the Museum, distribute the *Fossil Discovery!* scavenger hunt. Review the idea that by making observations, we can think of ways to describe the things around us.
- Students can split into small groups with chaperones and teachers to complete the scavenger hunt.

Helpful Hint:



Students will be asked to locate plant fossils inside the Museum as well as animal fossils. Plant fossils can be found alongside some displays including the Wall of Mammals on the main floor and in the lower level of the museum near the dinosaur diorama. In addition you can also find a fossilized tree trunk on each floor of the museum

Beneski Museum Scavenger Hunt

1. Find an animal larger than you. What did you find? Try walking like that animal.
2. Find an animal smaller than you. What did you find? Draw it in the space below.



3. Find an animal that is about the same size as you. What did you find? Name it.
4. Find an animal with wings. What did you find? How big is it?
5. How many of your animals had four legs?
6. Find a fossil in the Museum that is not an animal. What is it? How do you know?