

Science (Earth Science): Creating Fossils

Description: Children will have the opportunity to learn about fossils while creating their own.

Time: 15-20 minutes

Materials

Model Magic or Self-hardening clay
Playdough rollers
4 small plastic insects
Wax paper

Preparation

The week before create a couple of fossils by imprint the insects into the clay for the children to explore during the activity.

Vocabulary

- **Fossils** are preserved remains of an animal that died millions of years ago and have turned into stone.
- **Imprint** is a pattern or marking made by pressing something an item down on or into something else.
- **Paleontologist** is a scientist that collects fossils to study.
- **Observation** is the process of using our sense to collect information.



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Lesson

1. Show the children the fossil or the image of the fossil and ask the children if they know what it is. Engage in a brief conversation regarding the children's responses.
2. Say to the children, "**Fossils** are preserved remains of an animal that died millions of years ago and have turned into stone. Today we will be creating **fossils** and pretend we are **paleontologist**."
3. Ask the children if they know what a **paleontologist** is. Explain to the children a **paleontologist** a scientist that collects **fossils** to study.
4. Pass out the clay and the rollers; encourage the children to smooth the clay using the rollers.
5. Pass out the plastic insects and ask the children if they know what they are. Explain to the children we are going to create an insect fossil by pressing down the plastic insect into the clay and this will create a pattern or marking called an **imprint**.
6. As the children continue their activity; encourage the children to describe the **imprint** of the plastic insects they are using. For example, if a child is using a ladybug you might want to ask, "Why do you think this ladybug made an **imprint** with dots when press into the clay?...Yes you are right, the ladybug created an **imprint** with dots when press into the clay because the ladybug has dots. Good **observation**."
7. Pass out the wax paper for the children to place the insect fossils on top to dry.
8. Finish by passing out the pre-made insect fossils and encourage the children to match the plastic insect to the fossil. During this process you can ask the children if they can see the ridges on the insect fossil or why do they think the insect fit the insect fossil.

Tip: Insect fossils can be added to your science area for the children to explore using a magnified glass.