

The Life Story of a Fossil (student worksheet)

You are going to write your life, death and fossilization story as if you were an organism found by a present day paleontologist.

Choose a fossilized organism or trace fossil from *The Paleontology Portal* website, as instructed by your teacher. Your preliminary research will be done using the *PaleoPortal*, but you will need to find additional information either from links to the *PaleoPortal* site, other websites, books or other printed materials. The following table will help you keep track of the information you have found while doing your research.

KEY QUESTION	ANSWER	EVIDENCE
1) In what state (CA, NM, AR, etc.) were you found?		
2) In what geologic period did you live? How long ago was that?		
3) What is your scientific name? If you have a common name too, what is it?		
4) What was the climate like at the time you were living? What was the geography like in the location where you lived? What evidence could a paleontologist use to know that?		
5) Did you live in the air, in freshwater, saltwater, on land or a combination of these? What evidence could a paleontologist use to know that?		
6) Were you a carnivore? An herbivore? An omnivore? Evidence?		
7) Were you a predator or were you prey? If a predator, what organisms did you prey on, if prey, what organisms ate you? Evidence?		
8) What other flora and fauna lived during the same time as you? Evidence?		
9) What type of fossil are you?		
10) Where is your fossil now located? If known, who found you?		
11) What is your closest living (not extinct) relative?		
12) What characteristics do your living relatives share with you?		