

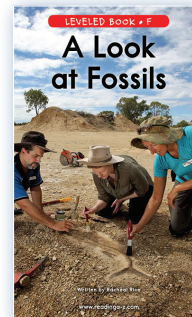
Focus Question:

What are fossils, and what can we learn from them?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

In *A Look at Fossils*, students will learn what fossils are and how they are formed. They will also have the opportunity to examine different fossils and learn to make inferences and draw conclusions based on what they observe. The detailed photographs and the use of high-frequency words support emergent readers. In this lesson, students will practice asking and answering questions as well as recognizing and using question marks.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Make inferences and draw conclusions
- ☐ Describe information provided by photographs
- ☐ Discriminate initial consonant *sh*-blend
- ☐ Identify initial consonant *sh*-blend
- ☐ Recognize and use question marks
- ☐ Recognize and use question words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *A Look at Fossils* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Make inferences / draw conclusions, initial consonant *sh*-blend, question marks worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- **High-frequency words:** *about*, *does*, *this*
- **Words to Know**
Story critical: *clues* (n.), *form* (v.), *fossils* (n.), *living* (adj.), *past* (n.), *stony* (adj.)
- **Academic vocabulary:** *detail* (n.), *show* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *fossil* on the board and read it aloud with students. Ask students to share what they know about fossils with the class.
- Have students work in groups and give each group a photograph of a fossil. Ask them to look at the photograph carefully and discuss the details they see. Encourage students to discuss what they learned about the fossil by studying its details. Have groups show their photograph to the class and share what they discussed.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *A Look at Fossils*. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers think about what they know and don't know about a topic before they begin to read. Create a KWLS chart on the board. Invite students to share their knowledge about fossils and record the information under the *K* column. Ask students what they want to know about fossils and record this information in the *W* column. Point out that the *L* column is to record what they have learned and the *S* column is to record what information that they still want to learn about that was not included in the book.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Make inferences / draw conclusions

- Explain to students that making inferences helps readers draw conclusions that the book does not directly state. Discuss with students how inferences are like clues from the book that help readers figure out something the author doesn't tell them in the text.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Write the following sentence on the board: *The boy gets out of bed, gets dressed, and brushes his teeth.* Model for students how to use this information to make an inference that it is morning, even though the sentence never directly states the time of day.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the copyright page. Point out that these words can be found in the story and that understanding the meaning of each word will help them better understand what they read. Read the words aloud to students, and as a group, discuss the meaning of each word. On the basis of the definitions discussed, have students work in groups to illustrate each vocabulary word on a poster. Have students share their posters with the class.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about fossils. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *How are fossils formed?* (level 1) page 3
- *What do fossils tell us?* (level 2) pages 3, 4, and 12
- *What does the fossil of the teeth tell us?* (level 3) page 7
- *In what way are the fossils on pages 9 and 12 the same? In what ways are they different?* (level 2) pages 9 and 12
- *Why did the author write this book about fossils?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Photographs

Explain that photographs are helpful when reading because they provide the reader with important information that the text cannot provide. Have students work with a partner to review the photograph on page 6. Ask students: *Why would the author choose to include photographs of the fossils rather than drawings? How does this photograph help you understand what a fossil looks like? How does this photograph give more detail than what is written in the book?* Have partners review other photographs in the book and discuss why the author chose each one.

Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Skill Review

- Review the questions listed on the KWLS chart with students. Invite volunteers to share information from the text that answered their questions and record this information in the *L* column. Ask students to share new questions and record them in the *W* column. Remind students that not all questions will be answered in the book and that those questions should be added to the *S* column.
- Model for students how to make inferences and draw conclusions from the book.
Think-aloud: *I see different examples of fossils on each page of the book. On page 5, there is a fossil of a plant. I see that there are lots of different flowerlike things on what looks like the branch of a tree. If it is from a tree, then I would conclude that it's a plant that tall animals would eat. The book does not tell me this information, but I can use the clues from the photographs and text to draw my own conclusions.*
- Model and discuss how to complete the **make-inferences / draw-conclusions worksheet**. Have students look at the first photograph on the worksheet and share a conclusion they made with a partner. Then, have volunteers share their conclusions with the whole class.

After Reading

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: Make inferences / draw conclusions

Review the make-inferences / draw-conclusions worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the inferences they made. Discuss with students the justification for drawing these conclusions.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Sample: *Fossils are things that we find in the ground that were covered by dirt from long ago. They show us details about how things looked and lived.*)

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness:

Initial consonant sh-blend

- Say the word *show* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial /sh/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the initial /sh/ sound.
- Say the words *sip* and *ship* aloud. Have students discuss with a partner the difference between the two words.
- Explain that the second word has an extra sound in the initial phoneme that gives the word a different beginning sound. Have students practice saying the /sh/ sound with a partner. Have them create a list of words that begin with the /sh/ sound. Invite volunteers to share their words with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time, and have students give the thumbs-up signal when they hear a word that begins with the /sh/ sound: *shelf, sign, bush, sheep, same, shoe, shell*.

Phonics: Initial consonant sh-blend

- Write the word *show* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /sh/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask a volunteer to underline the letters that represent the /sh/ sound in the word *show*.
- Have students discuss with a partner what the word would sound like if they took out the letter *Hh*. Discuss with students how the letters *Ss* and *Hh* blend together and make a new sound.
- Have students practice writing the letters *sh* on a sheet of paper while saying the /sh/ sound.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words that begin with the /sh/ sound on the board, leaving off the initial consonant blend: *shape, short, shut*. Say each word, one at a time, and have students come to the board to add the initial *sh* to each word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [initial-consonant-sh-blend worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: Question marks

- Write the following sentence on the board: *What details does it show?* Read the sentence aloud with students.

- Remind students that every sentence has a signal at the end so readers know when to stop reading. Invite a volunteer to come to the board and circle the signal at the end of the sentence.
- Remind students that the signal at the end of the sentence on the board is called a *question mark*. Have students say the phrase *question mark* aloud. Point out that the question mark is like a stop sign because it tells readers when to stop reading and that a question is being asked.
- Reread the sentence aloud to students while emphasizing how the voice is inflected at the end of a question sentence. Reread the sentence as if it were a statement, and discuss with the class what they noticed.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students locate and circle all the sentences in the book that end with a question mark. Have them practice reading the sentences to a partner while making sure to use the correct inflection in their voice.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [question marks worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Question words

- Have students turn to page 5 in their book. Have them locate the sentence that asks a question on the page and then point to the question word (*What*).
- Remind students that *question words* are words that let readers know that a question is being asked. Point out that one of the most common question words is *what*.
- Have students work in groups to create a list of other question words, such as *who, where, why, when, and how*. Invite volunteers to share their words with the class and record them on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students locate and underline or highlight every occurrence of the word *what* in the book. Have students ask a partner a question using the word *what*. Invite volunteers to share their sentences with the class.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.