

Fossils and Dinosaurs

Fossils

Mrs. Lomas, my science teacher, had a very special trip planned for my class. We had been learning a whole lot about fossils and dinosaurs. So, she took us on a trip to Central Park to be **archaeologists**¹ for the day. Archaeologists have the coolest job. They get to spend their days digging in the earth looking for fossils. How cool is that?

Central Park has this special program for schools. They set up a large sandbox with fossils buried inside the soil. We all got special digging tools and took a spot around the sandbox. It sounds easy, but the soil was very rocky and tough. Once we started finding fossils, it got really exciting. We found fossils of bugs, fish, and small plants. One lucky person dug up a piece of **amber**² that had a whole bug inside of it.

After the fossil hunting we talked about what we found. Most of the fossils are thousands of years old. Fossils are remains of ancient plants and animals. They are found in the earth or in a rock. Some fossils are small, like the outline of a leaf. Other fossils are huge, like a dinosaur bone! Fossils are cool because they tell you so much about the world thousands of years ago.

After the trip, everyone was really excited. Everyone wants to become an archaeologist now. Of course, I have always wanted to be one, even before our trip.

¹ **archaeologist:** a scientist who studies past life as shown by fossils or relics left by ancient peoples

² **amber:** a clear substance from ancient trees, sometimes containing insects or other materials

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. The students looked for fossils using
 - a. special digging tools
 - b. a metal detector
 - c. a magnifying glass
 - d. climbing gear

2. Why does the author describe things that students found on their trip?
 - a. to show that the trip was not fun
 - b. to say who won a competition
 - c. to give examples of fossils
 - d. to describe how amber is formed

3. Based on the passage, why does the author state that fossils can “tell you so much about the world thousands of years ago”?
 - a. because people have been digging up fossils for thousands of years
 - b. because fossils can teach you about plants and animals from the past
 - c. because people forgot about fossils for thousands of years until recently
 - d. because most fossils are books from long ago that describe human history

4. Read the following sentence: “Some fossils are small, like the outline of a leaf.”

The word **outline** means

- a. an enlarged version
 - b. something attached to another thing
 - c. a large group
 - d. a line in the shape of something

5. This passage is mostly about
 - a. a class trip where students are allowed to work on their favorite types of sciences.
 - b. why fossils are most easily found in the soil of North America.
 - c. going digging for fossils, which are the ancient remains of living things.
 - d. studying in college to become a professional archaeologist.

6. What is a fossil?

7. Based on the passage, how did the students' trip help them with learning about dinosaurs?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

After the field trip everyone wanted to be an archaeologist, _____ I always wanted to be one.

- a. since
- b. but
- c. because
- d. instead of

9. Read the following sentence.

Last week, my class went to Central Park to learn more about fossils and archaeology.

Answer the questions below based on the information provided in the sentence you just read. One of the questions has already been answered for you.

1. What? my class
2. What did the class do? _____
3. When? _____
4. Why? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** remains: parts of a whole left behind.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____

Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 670

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: This passage describes a student’s field trip to Central Park with her class. The entire class learned about fossils as well as the work of archaeologists.

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 - why fossils are most easily found in the soil of North America.
 - going digging for fossils, which are the ancient remains of living things.**
 - studying in college to become a professional archaeologist.

6. What is a fossil?

Suggested answer: A fossil is the remains of a plant or animal preserved in the earth, rock, or amber.

7. Based on the passage, how did the students' trip help them with learning about dinosaurs?

Suggested answer: The students dug up fossils, and dinosaur bones are one type of fossil. The students got to experience the work that archaeologists do when they look for and study dinosaur fossils.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

After the field trip everyone wanted to be an archaeologist, _____ I always wanted to be one.

- since
- but**
- because
- instead of

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Answer the questions below based on the information provided in the sentence you just read. One of the questions has already been answered for you.

1. What? my class

2. What did the class do? **went to Central Park**
3. When? **last week**
4. Why? **to learn more about fossils and archaeology**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** remains: parts of a whole left behind.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.