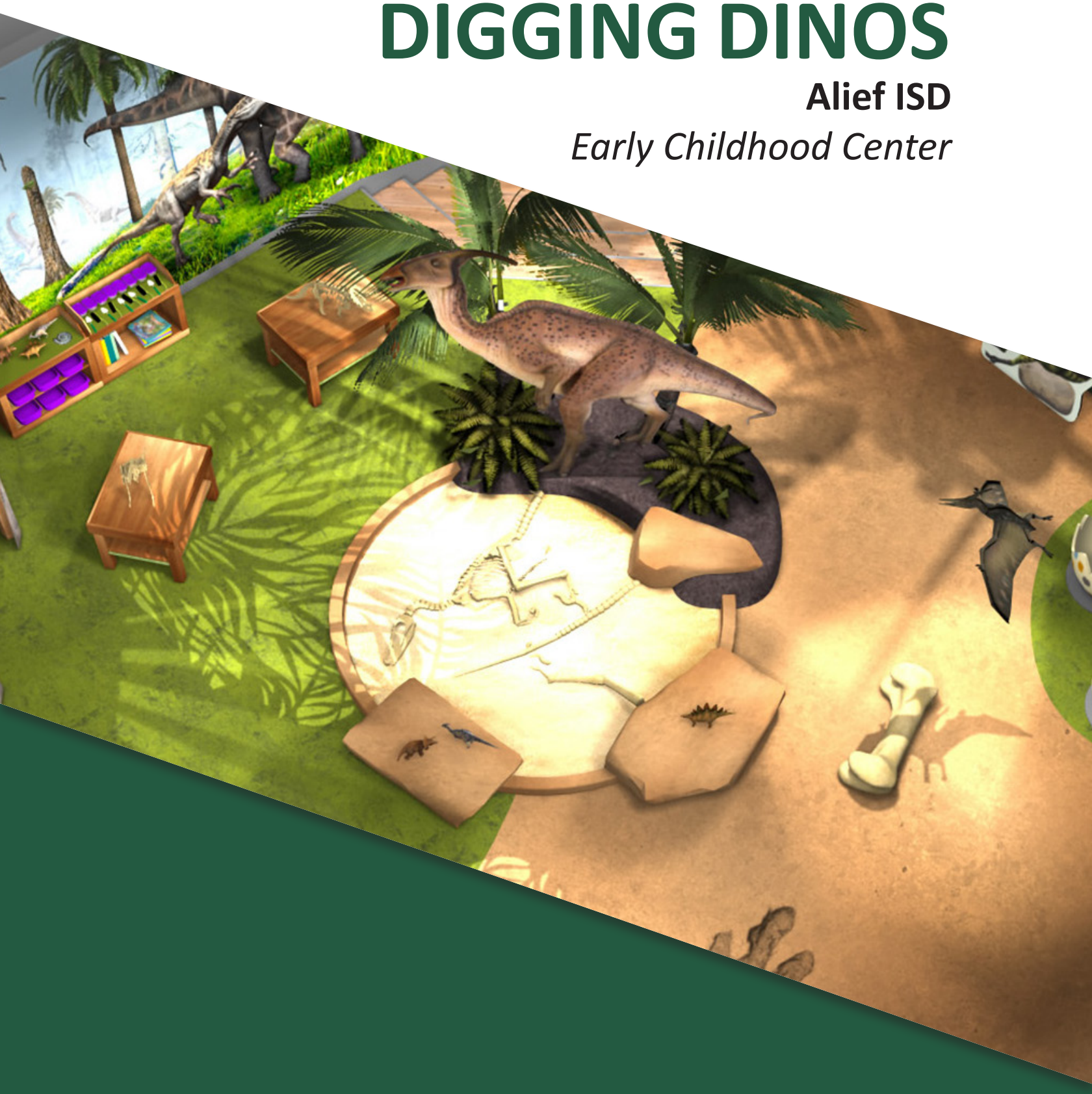
DIGGING DINOS

Alief ISD

Early Childhood Center



EXPLORATION™ zones

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EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

Welcome to your new classroom! You may be experiencing many emotions—excitement, uncertainty, even apprehension. This is completely expected. Experiential learning may be new to you as a concept or theory, but rest assured, many of the principles that bind experiential learning have likely been applied by you for years. Experiential learning embodies the active participation, social engagement, and meaningful connections that we know are the pillars of play-based learning. Play is how young children learn!

This guide is intended to support you as you transition to a new classroom environment. You will find helpful background information on the theory, activity ideas organized by skill domains, experiential learning resources, and tools to assist you in reflective teaching practices. Most importantly, have fun with your students in this new learning environment. The classroom space really is a second teacher and the possibilities are endless!

What is Experiential Education?

Experiential education is a theory that acknowledges humans as active participants in the learning process. In the classroom, students are at the center of the learning process, actively engaging and participating in decision-making. Students' interests and needs drive topics of study with small group and individual projects evolving from their curiosities and real-life events. Experiential learning environments, like museums and zoos, naturally provide opportunities for inquiry-based learning that inspire curiosity and passion. These same features and opportunities are available in experiential learning classrooms.

How does experiential education impact your role as a teacher?

Teachers learn about students by actively listening and observing. You listen to conversations, observe students' choices, and communicate with families. Through this listening and observing, you can make assumptions about what students know and provide new materials, activities, and experiences that help expand upon this knowledge. By asking open-ended questions and encouraging students to make observations, students begin to build a schema that continues to grow.

How does experiential education impact the students' role?

Students are at the center of the learning process. Students' interests and needs drive topics of conversation and participation in activities. Students in experiential learning classrooms make choices and decisions throughout the day. They choose whether they play alone or in a group, they choose activity options that sound most appealing, and they choose to engage with interesting materials and equipment.

How Do I Use an Experiential Education Classroom?

A new classroom can be overwhelming, not only for you, but for your students too. Being prepared can help manage those overwhelming feelings and set you up for success in your new environment. Before introducing the classrooms to your students, take a gallery walk in each classroom, taking in the sights and sounds without interruptions. As you are noticing and observing features in the classroom, think about big ideas or themes that might naturally stem from these features. You can list activities or play-based items that might align with these ideas; several activity ideas and accompanying items are provided in the educator guide to help you get started. Introduce the classrooms to the students by taking a community gallery walk. Ask students to describe what they notice, how they feel, and what they would like to know more about.

What Will I Find in Each Experiential Education Classroom?

Each experiential education classroom includes similar best practices and strategies for working with young children, not only in the design but in the supportive activities. The unique themes and content can lead to new ideas and projects stemming from students' interests and questions. Each classroom includes:

- **A General Supply Kit:** A collection of materials that can be used in open-ended ways
- **Magnetic Boards:** Engagement tools for group learning or individual interactions
- **A Classroom Library:** Developmentally appropriate Spanish and English, non-fiction and fiction books, that support the theme
- **Sensory Exploration:** A station or area that encourages inquiry-based investigations
- **An Educator Guide:** A facilitation tool that includes supportive activities and ideas for assessment

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DIGGING DINOS

Snap-Dinos

DD.01

I.C.4 Child increasingly interacts with peers during cooperative play scenarios that share a common plan and goal.

Students practice fine motor skills while participating in open-ended building and imaginative play with Snap-Dinos. Snap-Dinos connector pieces encourage parallel and associative play and will also include environment cards to entice extended play in a variety of ways.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Introduce the Snap-Dinos and environment cards to the students. Include an introduction to the various types of pieces for free exploration, which include legs, tails, spikes, bodies, and heads.
2. Encourage children to create dinosaurs using the color-coded pieces or mix pieces to create unique dinosaurs that they can name. Students can use the environment cards to extend the imaginative play and have conversations about prehistoric environments.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- The wooden Snap-Dinos can be used for tracing and discussing common shapes. Students trace the wooden pieces onto paper to create dinosaurs and add detail, if interested.
- Snap-Dinos can also be used in sorting activities. Children can sort by color, feature, and function.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaurs Have Emotions Too

DD.02

I.B.2.b Child uses verbal and nonverbal communication to communicate basic emotions and feelings.

Educator reads the book *How Do Dinosaurs Say I'm Mad* by Jane Yolen. Be sure to point out the various emotions of the dinosaurs as you read along. After the read aloud, students can reread the book, using emote cards to take on the different perspectives of the dinosaurs.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

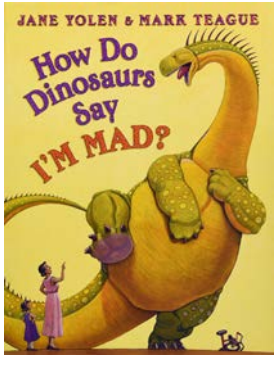
1. Read *How Do Dinosaurs Say I'm Mad* by Jane Yolen, emphasizing the emotions the dinosaur is feeling throughout the story. Be sure to ask open-ended questions like "How do you think the dinosaur is feeling?," "How can you tell?," and "Tell me about a time that you felt the same way."
2. Reread the book, asking students to choose the matching emotion card as the dinosaur is feeling on each page. Reiterate the question, "Tell me about a time that you felt the same way."

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- As part of the daily morning meeting, ask students to choose the emote card they are feeling in the moment. Talk about why they are feeling that way. Discuss ways they can manage their emotions like the dinosaur in the story.
- Create emotion masks for students to use throughout the day as an alternative way to express their feelings. Cut two paper plates in half and attach a craft stick to the back of each half using tape. On the other side, draw an appropriate facial expression for happy, mad, sad, and silly. Students can hold up the mask to express emotions as needed or support character feelings in read alouds.

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DIGGING DINOS

Guessing Bag

DD.03

II.D.1 Child understands (receptive) and uses (expressive) a wide variety of words to label, describe and make connections among objects, people, places, actions, and events.

Using dinosaur picture cards and dinosaur models, students participate in a guessing game. Educator places a dinosaur into an opaque bag and provides simple detail about the dinosaur. Using the dinosaur picture cards as a guide, students make deductions and guess which dinosaur the teacher is describing.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Show students the dinosaur models and matching dinosaur cards. Discretely place one of the dinosaurs into the opaque bag. Tell students that they will try to guess which dinosaur is in the bag by listening to clues.
2. Provide students with several clues, such as: "This dinosaur walks on four legs" and "This dinosaur has a long neck," referring to the matching dinosaur cards after each clue. Students can start to make deductions after each clue until they are able to guess the dinosaur's identity. Point out matching picture card after the dinosaur's identity has been discovered.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Extend the activity by creating a tactile experience. Before providing any clues, allow each student to touch the dinosaur in the bag without looking. Can they make observations with their hands? Encourage students to describe what they are feeling.
- Ask students to bring something in from home to place in the bag. Students can work on using describing words and phrases as they provide clues to their classmates, with adult assistance.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur Retelling

DD.04

II.B.1 Child uses language for multiple purposes.

Students compare versions of stories and work on beginning, middle, and end of a story in this activity. Educator reads aloud *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*, by Mo Willems and *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* by Parragon Books. After the read alouds, students retell the stories in their own words using hand puppets and visuals from the books.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

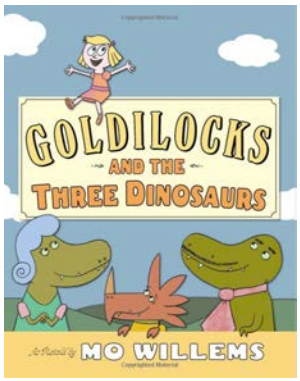
1. Read both *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs* by Mo Willems and *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* by Parragon Books, highlighting features of each page in preparation of sequencing and comparing. After the first read aloud, reiterate what happened first, second, and third in each book. Ask the following questions: "Did you notice anything that was the same in both books" and "Did you notice anything different?"
2. Read the books again, asking students to read along using the hand puppets. Encourage students to retell the books in their own words, using the hand puppets.

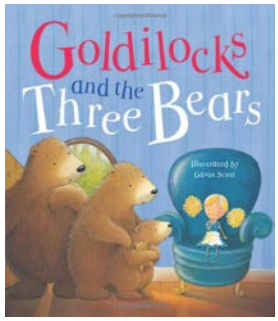
TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Students can retell the story as a sensory experience. Mix shaving cream and brown food coloring to make "pudding" from the story *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*. Add the mixture to a sensory tray and encourage students to draw features from the story with their finger as they read along.
- The book is a great introduction to small and big comparison activities and conversations. Make a t-chart and compare small and big items in the classroom.

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DIGGING DINOS

An Island Grows Story Talk

DD.05

III.D.2 Child uses information learned from books by describing, relating, categorizing, or comparing and contrasting.

Talking about stories that you read helps children develop a robust vocabulary and link stories to everyday life. During a reading of *An Island Grows* by Lola M. Schaefer, talk about what you are reading in the moment. Educator reads the text slowly, asking open-ended questions such as, "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "How do you think the character in the story feels?" Students can extend the story content by making playdough volcanoes.

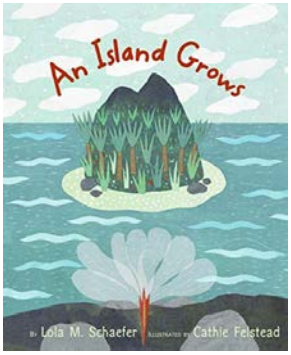
DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Read *An Island Grows* by Lola M. Schaefer slowly, asking open-ended questions throughout. Question examples include: "What do you think is going to happen next?," "How do you think the character in the story feels?," and "Tell me about a time that you felt that way." This real-life connection to text will help with the future development of children's comprehension skills.
2. Extend the story content by encouraging students to make volcanoes out of Play-Doh. Draw attention to physical features, such as the shape (cone) and eruption opening (crater).

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- The volcano eruption process can be easily replicated in the classroom using household materials and a cone shape. Place a small canister under the cone shape. Fill the canister with 2 tbsps. of baking soda, add a spoonful of dish soap, a drop of red and yellow food coloring, and lastly, a small amount of vinegar. Ask students to make observations.
- Add sand to the sensory table and encourage children to make islands and volcanoes using the sand.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur Word Bank: Play with Words

DD.06

IV.C.3 Child begins to write familiar words using letter-sound correspondences, often using letters associated with beginning and/or ending sounds to write words.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. **Play with Words:** Students build vocabulary by participating in rhyming activities. Educator can take a word from the word bank and rhyme it, encouraging children to jump in.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. The word bank can be used to help students begin to recognize rhyming words. Review the words in the word bank with students. Choose one word to start the song, sung to the tune of *The Muffin Man* and continue as you move through the word bank words.
   Do you know two rhyming words, rhyming words, rhyming words?
   Do you know two rhyming words? They sound a lot alike.
   ***Bone** and **cone** are rhyming words, rhyming words, rhyming words*
   ***Bone** and **cone** are rhyming words. They sound a lot alike.*
2. This educator-directed strategy can be used throughout the day including transition times and as part of the daily routine.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Create additional word banks with rhyming words from the themed word bank. For example: the themed word bank word is *bone*. Educator can hook words that rhyme with *bone* on a metal ring, including a picture with the word.
- Place objects for the corresponding word bank in a basket. During large group time, pass around the basket, calling out a rhyming word as each child chooses an item from the basket. The words can be real or made-up; encourage the students to focus on the ending sound.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dino Letter Knowledge

DD.07

III.C.1 Child recognizes and names at least 20 letters (upper- or lower-case letters).

Educator fills “dinosaur eggs” with letters and numbers the eggs using the numbered stickers. Students roll the die and take an egg with the corresponding number. Educator encourages the student to read the letter with assistance. Students keeps the egg or puts the egg back into the circle, depending on the game.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. This activity should be introduced after students have been engaged in other meaningful and authentic letter recognition experiences. Fill plastic eggs with letters. Put numbers on the outside using the numbered stickers. The child rolls the die and takes that number egg, reading the letter inside with assistance. Encourage students to find letters in other places around the room to help make meaningful connections.
2. If you are using this activity as a game, the student keeps the egg if they read the letter correctly. For a small group phonics activity, the egg goes back into the “nest” to be read by another student.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

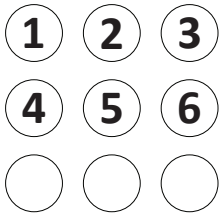
- As students become comfortable reading letters, you can place common sight words or words from the word bank into the eggs.
- The letters can be added to the sensory table filled with sand as a free-choice activity. Students can keep a list of the letters that they found in the sensory table.

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DIGGING DINOS

Digging Dinos Alphabet: Squishy Bags

DD.08

III.C.1 Child recognizes and names at least 20 letters (upper- or lower-case letters).

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. **Squishy Bags:** Educator chooses a letter to focus on each day, displaying the letter on the magnetic board. Students use squishy bags in the learning center to practice forming the letter. Squishy bags can be easily made with resealable zipper storage bags, flour, water, and food coloring.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Make the squishy bags by combining 1 cup of flour, 6 tbsps. of water and food coloring in a bowl and stirring until well blended. Place the mixture inside of the Ziploc bag and squeeze out any excess air before sealing the bag. Secure the top with clear packaging tape, if necessary.
2. Ask students to practice writing the letter of the day with their finger. Encourage students to write their name and word bank words as well.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Squishy bags can be used to create shapes, lines, and patterns as well as practice letters and numbers. Adding the squishy bags to a light table encourages observation.
- Students can use other materials to write. Use a soft paint brush or a Q-tip to write letters, numbers, and shapes.

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Dinosaur Tracing

DD.09

IX.B.2 Child shows increasing control of tasks that require eye-hand coordination.

Students work on emergent literacy and transition to letter formations by tracing lines, patterns, and shapes with a dinosaur theme in a dry erase, reusable format. To connect to fine motor development, students are encouraged to add detail. Dinosaur templates are included for tracing.

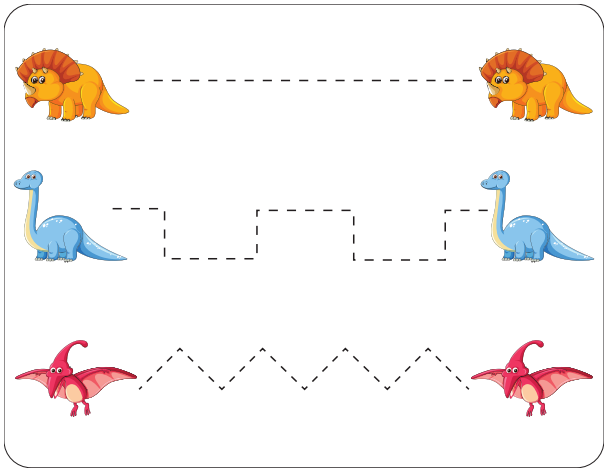
DOING THE ACTIVITY

Place the dry erase templates in the writing center. Students have the choice to use dry erase markers on the dry erase templates or pencil/crayon on paper. Remind students to start from left to right and top to bottom.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Include the dinosaur tracing patterns in the writing center to align with other free-choice writing exercises. Using a clipboard will help students control the writing utensil.
- Tape the template vertically, on an easel or teacher board, to encourage the strengthening of fine motor development.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur Sort

DD.10

V.E.1 Child sorts objects that are the same and different into groups and uses language to describe how the groups are similar and different.

Students sort plastic dinosaurs by color, type, and other educator directed categories. Educator can consider other activities that can be facilitated using the plastic dinosaurs like freezing in water and hosting discussions about liquids, solids, and change.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Label the sorting bowls with the appropriate color. Place the dinosaur figures and colored sorting bowls in the math learning center for students to self-sort. Ask students to consider other ways to sort the dinosaur figures.
2. Freeze the dinosaurs in water overnight and place in the sensory table. Ask students to make physical and tactile observations throughout the day. Ask the following questions: “How does the ice feel?,” “ What do you notice about the ice throughout the day?,” and “How can we slow the melting process?”

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- The dinosaur figures can be used for a variety of activities. Students can use them to compare physical features, as counting manipulatives, and students can use a balance scale to compare weight.
- Include the dinosaur figures in the writing center. Students can trace the dinosaurs’ features and make comparisons.

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DIGGING DINOS

What's a Footprint?

DD.11

V.D.1 Child recognizes and compares heights or lengths of people or objects.

Students learn that a footprint can tell a lot about a dinosaur and about themselves as they use various measuring tools, including non-standard measurement tools, to compare their foot size to flexible dinosaur prints.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Draw attention to the flexible dinosaur footprints. Ask students, "What do you notice about the dinosaur footprints?" and "Do you think the footprints are the same length, shorter, or longer than your footprint?"
2. Encourage students to measure the dinosaur footprints using the various tools: math links, Unifix Cubes, and measuring tape. They can record their measurements or use number flashcards to keep track. Next, have students measure their own footprint and record their measurement. What do they notice about the dinosaur footprint measurements compared to the measurement of their own footprint?

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- With assistance, students can trace their footprint onto paper and overlay onto the dinosaur footprints as a tangible way to make observations and compare size.
- Non-standard measurement can be incorporated into everyday activities. Children may use additional non-standard measurement tools such as hands and fingers to estimate length, blocks or squares for area, and sand and water for capacity to reinforce comparing.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur Bones Match and Measure

DD.12

V.D.1 Child recognizes and compares heights or lengths of people or objects.
V.D.3 Child recognizes and compares weights of objects.

Dinosaur bones and matching activity cards encourage children to match, count, compare order, and measure bones. Dinosaur bones can be used in the Dino Dig Site or tabletop containers filled with kinetic sand.

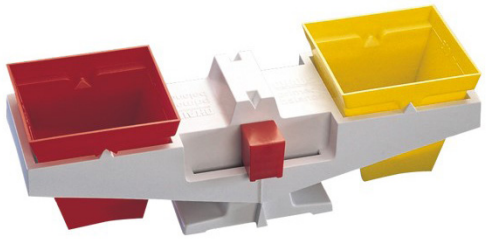
DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Place the Dinosaur Bones Match & Measure Set in the math center for free exploration. Students can use the activity cards to match the bone to the corresponding shadow or use non-standard and standard measuring tools to measure length and compare weight.
2. As a small group activity, ask the students to align the bones by height, from shortest to longest. Can they align by height, longest to shortest?

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- As a fine arts experience, encourage students to trace the bones to create an imaginary dinosaur. Students can add detail and name their dinosaur.
- Use the bones in the Dino Dig Site and ask students to bury and recover their bones using excavation tools.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur Puzzles

DD.13

IX.B.2 Child shows increasing control of tasks that require eye-hand coordination.

Students learn about parts to whole relationships and problem solving by manipulating puzzle pieces. Developmentally appropriate puzzles with a dinosaur theme spark curiosity and encourage students to find out more about dinosaurs and the habitat in which they lived.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

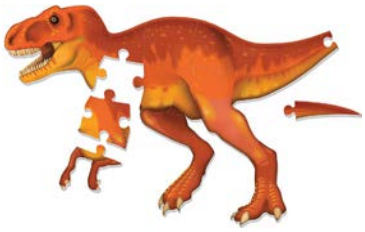
Puzzles are a wonderful free choice or center activity as they help young children think critically, visually discriminate, and problem solve with little assistance or direction. Place the puzzles in a free choice center for individual or peer-to-peer exploration.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Hide the puzzle pieces in the Dino Dig Site. Ask students to find the puzzle pieces and put them back together.
- You can easily make your own puzzles for the classroom! Print several dinosaur photos of your choosing, laminate them, and cut out puzzles shapes that can be easily analyzed and manipulated by your students.
- Students can make their own puzzles by tracing puzzle pieces, coloring a picture on their tracing, and cutting out the pieces, with adult assistance.

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DIGGING DINOS

Digging for Dino Bones

DD.14

VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes and discusses the characteristics of organisms.

Students use tools like brushes and plastic trowels to uncover fossils and dinosaur bones that are brought to the paleontologist area.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Place the faux dinosaur bones in the Dino Dig Site or storage container for free exploration. Introduce the word excavation to students. Students use excavation tools like brushes and shovels and observation tools like magnifying glasses to uncover characteristics and features.
2. To use as an educator-led activity, ask students to find bones with specific features. For example, ask students to find the fossil with scales or the fossil with wings in the Dino Dig Site.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Create your own dinosaur bones using basic household ingredients: 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 cup water and stir until almost fully mixed. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth. Make bone shapes, using non-fiction books and images as inspiration. Place on cookie sheet and bake at 250 degree Fahrenheit for about 3 hours.
- Make imprint fossils using clay or homemade dough. Students can use the bones and imprint fossils as a matching activity.
- Bury wooden letters in the Dino Dig Site; ask students to find letters and build word bank words.

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DIGGING DINOS

Making a Fossil

DD.15

VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes and discusses the characteristics of organisms.

Students use faux dinosaur bones and sensory/kinetic sand to uncover the skeletal remains of dinosaurs. Educator can extend the activity by using different materials like Model Magic to make imprints.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Place the kinetic sand and dinosaur skulls in the Rubbermaid storage. Encourage the students to make imprints with the skulls in the sand, asking questions like, “What do you see in the sand?” and “Can you change the imprint shape by turning the dinosaur skull over and pressing it into the sand?”
2. The Model Magic can be used to make a different type of imprint. Ask students how the imprints in the kinetic sand and Model Magic are the same and different.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Play-Doh can be used to make fossils as well. You can use dinosaur cookie cutters or dinosaur figures to make the imprints.
- Extend the dinosaur excavation site by adding DIY paper mache dinosaur eggs or plastic eggs and rocks, sticks, and leaves from outdoors.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur/Woolly Mammoth Magnet Exploration

DD.16

VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes and discusses the characteristics of organisms.

Students learn about physical attributes of dinosaurs and woolly mammoths, comparing their similarities and their differences, by exploring magnetic pieces on the magnetic wall. Students can compare to easily recognizable animals that are visible today and have discussions about the evolution of animals' physical nature and behaviors.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Add the magnets to the writing center to entice tracing. Students can trace the dinosaur magnets and add details, creating a real or imaginary dinosaur.
- Extend the conversation about features by creating a body part word bank and placing in the writing center. Include words such as head, arm, teeth, claw, eye, neck, leg, tail, toe, and back.
- Connect to physical science applications by encouraging students to explore using the magnets on other surfaces in the classroom. What do they notice about the magnetic board and other surfaces in the classroom?

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Place the dinosaur magnets on the magnetic wall for free exploration. Encourage students to build a dinosaur using the parts, discussing the features and purpose.
2. During large group or small group, bring out the dinosaur and woolly mammoth magnets for a discussion on changing (DAP evolution). The woolly mammoth lived during a time period after the dinosaurs. Ask the following questions: "What dinosaur does the woolly mammoth look most similar to?," "How does the woolly mammoth look the same/different than the dinosaur?," "Can you think of a wild animal that you might see today that looks similar to a woolly mammoth?"

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DIGGING DINOS

We Are the Dinosaurs

DD.17

VIII.B.1 Child participates in classroom music activities including singing, playing musical instruments, and moving to rhythms.

Using the book, *We Are the Dinosaurs*, by Laurie Berkner for inspiration, students use instruments to march along with the text. Students learn to move in rhythm to simple tunes and musical patterns.

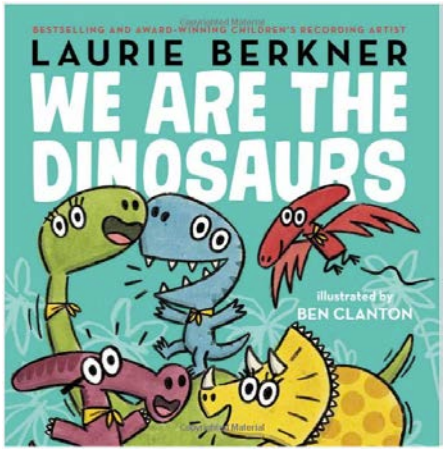
DOING THE ACTIVITY

Read *We Are the Dinosaurs* by Laurie Berkner, emphasizing the rhythmic nature of the text. During a second read aloud, encourage students to use instruments to read along with the text, focusing on the beats (syllables) of the words.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Set out materials for students to make their own musical instruments. Examples include:
  - **Tambourines:** 2 paper plates stapled together, filled with dried beans
  - **Jingle bells:** bells attached to pipe cleaners, intertwined on craft sticks
  - **Egg shakers:** plastic eggs filled with rice or beans, taped around the center with washi tape. Add plastic spoons if you would like handles
- Create speech bubbles using bubble templates adhered to a straw to read the dialog text. Place the speech bubble over the dialog text, telling the students these are the words the characters are saying.

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DIGGING DINOS

Body Coverings

DD.18

VIII.A.1 Child uses a variety of art materials and activities for sensory experience and exploration.
VIII.A.2 Child uses art as a form of creative self-expression and representation.

Students learn that animals have body coverings to serve functions. Some animals have fur, some animals have skin, some have scales. Students can recreate a visual representation of body coverings using art materials like faux fur, scales (paper), and faux feathers.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. After sharing several non-fiction books from the classroom library about dinosaur body coverings, review the different body coverings (fur, scales, skin, feathers) and the function of each. Relate to human body coverings.
2. Introduce the open-ended art activity. Students can choose a dinosaur template and art materials (textured paper, faux feathers, faux fur) to glue onto their template, or create textured rubbings using the textured rubbing plates. Encourage students to share their new dinosaur creation.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Create a tactile fur, feathers, and scale activity. Using three tissue boxes, place faux fur, feathers, and scale in each, asking students to use their sense of touch to determine the body covering type.
- Start an animal coverings collection in the classroom. Label different sections of a wall "Fur," "Scales," "Feathers," and "Other Coverings." Ask students to add animal pictures, either cut out or drawn, to the collection as part of a comparison to animals we know.

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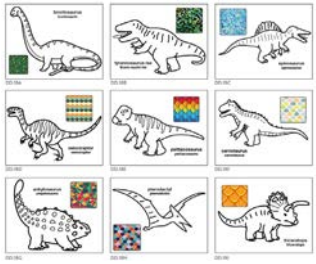












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DIGGING DINOS

I Can Be a Paleontologist!

DD.19

VIII.C.1 Child creates or recreates stories, moods, or experiences through dramatic representations.

Students are provided plenty of materials for dramatic play, including dinosaur puppets, felt pieces for recreating environments and adding texture, safety glasses, excavating clothing, and large faux rocks. Students work on parallel play while increasingly initiating pretend play with their peers.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

Set up a few of the paleontologist items in the Dino Dig Site or other dramatic play area to inspire creative play. You can rotate items in and out. Encourage children to put on a puppet show, build a dinosaur enclosure, bury dinosaur bones, and more!

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Listen to students' conversations and add more items as the creative play evolves. Geodes, magnifying glasses, flashlights, and tape measures would be great additions; although, authentic conversations will provide you with ideas about students' interests.
- Add letter cookie cutters to the Dino Dig Site. Students can explore literacy concepts in a meaningful way.

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DIGGING DINOS

Prehistoric Landscapes

DD.20

VII.C.1 Child identifies and creates common features in the natural environment.

Students manipulate kinetic sand to create landscapes for model dinosaurs. Students can browse through non-fiction books for landscape inspiration.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. For easy clean up, empty the Dino Play Sand Kit, dinosaur figures, and foliage into the container. This works well as a free-choice, table-top activity.
2. Encourage students to build landscapes with the malleable sand. Students can also collect items from outdoor walks like rocks, sticks, and leaves to add to their landscape creations.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Use a tarp under the foldable “sandbox” to encourage students to make larger landscapes or landscapes that the children would like to keep out for a longer period of time.
- Use Insta-Snow (Steve Spangler) instead of sand in the container. Include the woolly mammoth figures, emphasizing the fact that woolly mammoths lived during a different period than the dinosaurs.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dinosaur Skeletons

DD.21

IX.B.1 Child shows control of tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.

Students use dinosaur identification cards to build dinosaur skeletons. Items such as pasta, Q-tips, craft sticks, straws, and Play-Doh encourage small muscle development in fingers.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Ask students what dinosaur they would like to create, showing the students their choices, which include Tyrannosaurus, Stegosaurus, Pterodactyl, Parasaurolophus, Triceratops, or Brontosaurus.
2. Students can use 1 or more art item(s) to "trace" the dinosaur image, gluing the items on the image. Encourage students to add more detail to their dinosaur with crayon or marker, such as drawing items the dinosaur may eat or things you might see in the dinosaur's environment.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Leave copies of the dinosaur prints in the writing center and encourage students to trace the dinosaur, placing the print under a sheet of blank paper and tracing the image underneath.
- As students develop fine motor skills, add items like Wikki Stix and pipe cleaners for tracing. These items add a slight challenge to the tracing.

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DIGGING DINOS

Dino Walk

DD.22

IX.A.2 Child coordinates sequence of movements to perform tasks
III.C.1 Child recognizes and names at least 20 letters (upper- or lower-case letters).

Students use dinosaur footprints to practice letter and beginning sound recognition while emphasizing gross motor movements. Educator or students can place the dinosaur prints in a pattern or scattered around to entice students to walk like a dinosaur while reciting what is on each footprint.

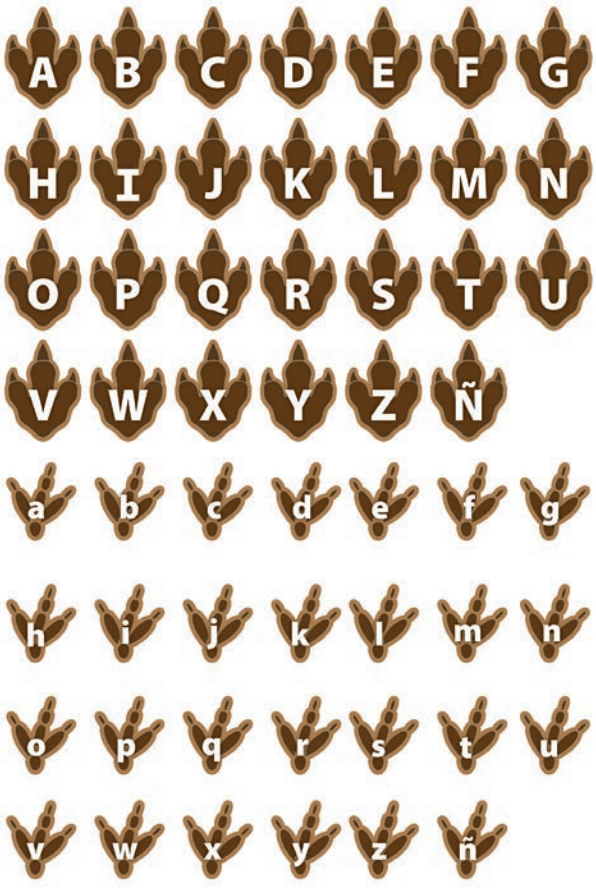
DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Arrange the dinosaur footprints on the floor alphabetically or in another pattern of your choosing. Ask students to call out the letter or beginning sound as they walk over a footprint like a dinosaur.
2. Encourage other gross motor movements as they become comfortable walking like a dinosaur. Students can jump like a dinosaur, fly like a dinosaur, and swim like a dinosaur. Use music to encourage movements like swaying and waving like a dinosaur.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Ask students to arrange the dinosaur footprints alphabetically (after you have modeled). Encourage students to find the first letter in their name and use the dinosaur footprints to spell their name.
- As a challenge, use the dinosaur footprints to spell other words/text in the classroom environment.

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DIGGING DINOS

Making Observations About Dinosaurs-Using AR

DD.23

X.A.4 Child uses technology to access appropriate information, with adult assistance.
X.A.1 Child opens and navigates through digital learning applications and programs, when appropriate.

Students learn the fundamental skills of technology and explore 4D images using Octagon Studios Flashcards. Students make verbal observations as they explore the flashcards.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. You will need a mobile device to use the Dinosaur 4D cards. Download the brainSTEM app through the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Open the app, place the Dinosaur 4D card on a surface and scan with your device's camera. Input the serial number in the pop-up serial box.
2. Provide students with the freedom to explore the simple features like dinosaur actions and skeleton observations. Ask students to observe how the dinosaur moves and how the dinosaur sounds.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Use the Dinosaur 4D cards to introduce the new classroom. Find out what students already know about dinosaurs and make a list. Students can revisit the list before moving on to the next classroom.
- Use the 4D images as a picture guide for other activities such as Body Coverings DD.18 and Dinosaur Skeletons DD.21. Students can use the images for inspiration and reference.

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DIGGING DINOS

Virtual Museum Adventures

DD.24

X.A.4 Child uses technology to access appropriate information, with adult assistance.
X.A.1 Child opens and navigates through digital learning applications and programs, when appropriate.

Educator can bring the museum into the classroom by tapping into resources from The American Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Canadian Museum of Nature, and National History Museum. Virtual field trips provide accessibility and real-life experiences without typical barriers.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Review the virtual field trips to see which may be most interesting and appropriate for your students. Options include but are not limited to:
   - **Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History:** Over 700 fossil specimen to explore including a T-Rex, Diplodocus, and woolly mammoth.
   - **Melbourne Museum:** Virtual tour and videos of staff explaining things like the link between birds and dinosaurs, how paleontologists read fossils, and what we can learn from fossils.
   - **American Natural History Museum:** Games where you can reconstruct and identify fossils and create dinosaur roars.
2. Determine aspects of the museum that you would like students to focus on. Provide students the opportunity to explore in small groups, with guiding questions such as, "How are these fossils similar to animals you see today?" and "How are they different?"

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Virtual field trips are a great way to introduce a new topic or theme as they often provide the "big picture."
- Virtual offerings continue to grow at museums and other informal learning organizations. Register on museum websites to stay informed and included in free offerings.
- Connect with the education team at a museum to schedule a Q&A with an expert that is comfortable talking with early learners.



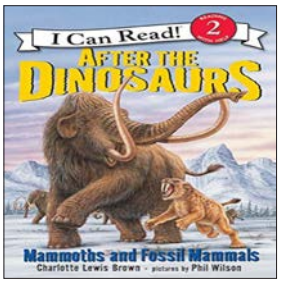
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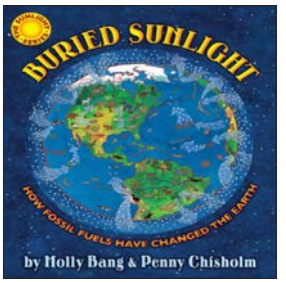


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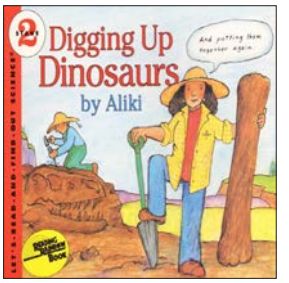
NON-FICTION



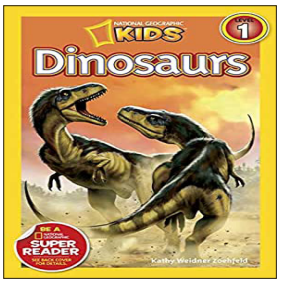
After the Dinosaurs: Mammoths and Fossil Mammals



Buried Sunlight: How Fossil Fuels Have Changed the Earth



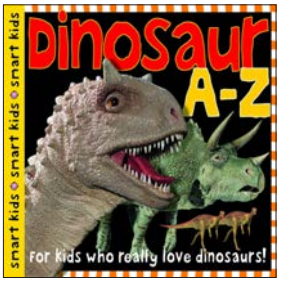
Digging Up Dinosaurs



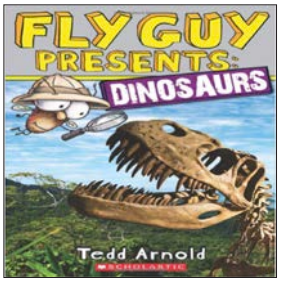
Dinosaurs



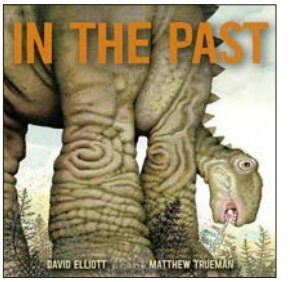
Los dinosaurios



Dinosaurs A-Z: For Kids Who Really Love Dinosaurs!



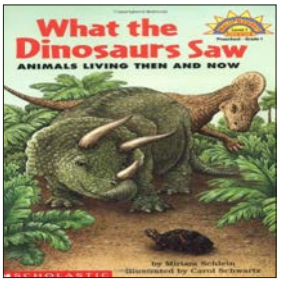
Fly Guy Presents: Dinosaurs



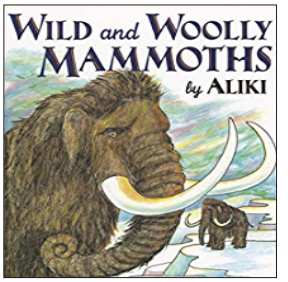
In the Past: From Trilobites to Dinosaurs to Mammoths in More Than 500 Million Years.



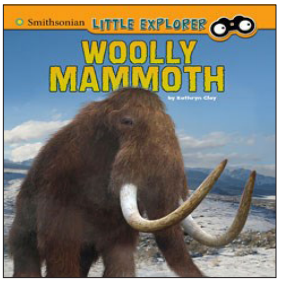
National Geographic Little Kids First Big Book of Dinosaurs



What the Dinosaurs Saw: Animals Living Then and Now.



Wild and Woolly Mammoth



Woolly Mammoths



Woolly Mammoths

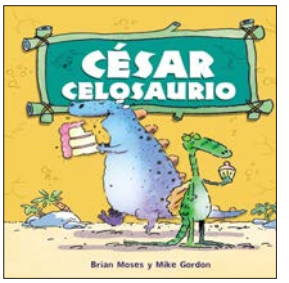
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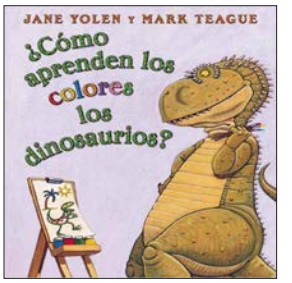
FICTION



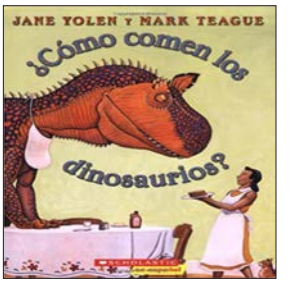
Adoptar un Dinosaurio



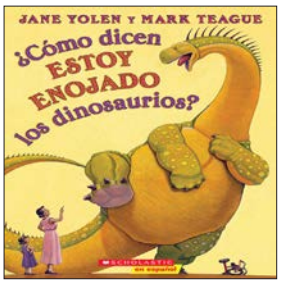
César Celosaurio



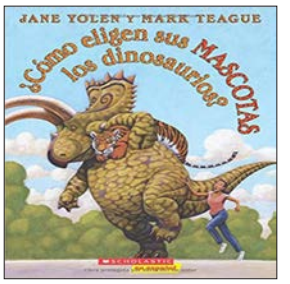
Cómo Aprenden los Colores los Dinosaurios?



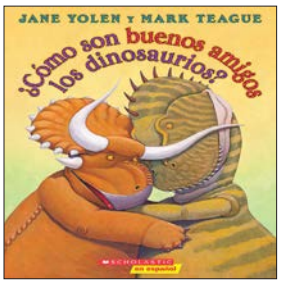
Cómo Comen los Dinosaurios?



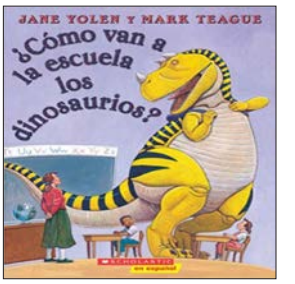
Como Dicen Estoy Enojado los Dinosaurios?



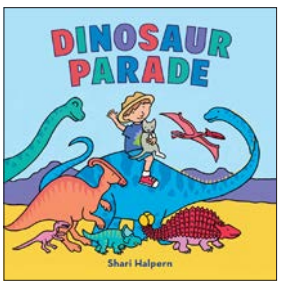
Cómo Eligen sus Mascotas los Dinosaurios?



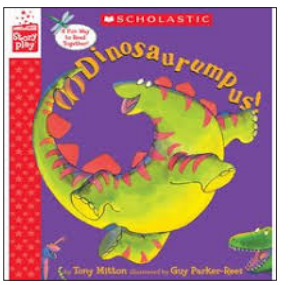
Cómo son Buenos Amigos?



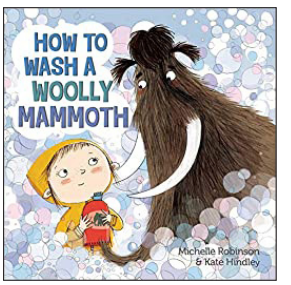
Cómo Van a la Escuela los Dinosaurios?



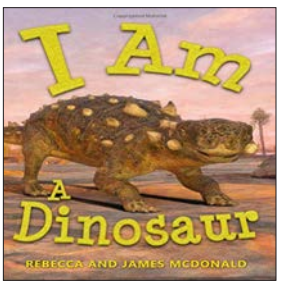
Dinosaur Parade



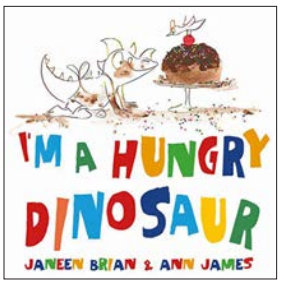
Dinosaurumpus



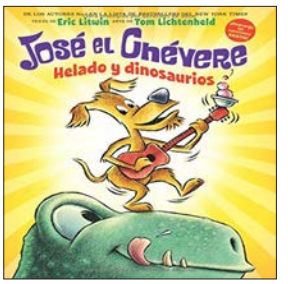
How to Wash a Woolly Mammoth



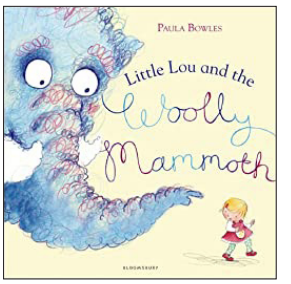
I am a Dinosaur



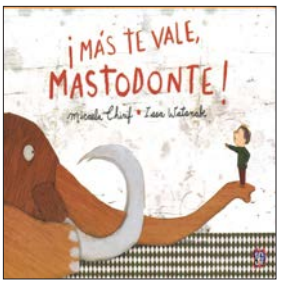
I'm a Hungry Dinosaur



José el Chévere: Helado y Dinosaurios



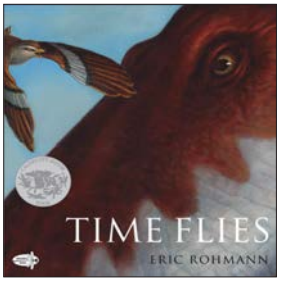
Little Lou and the Woolly Mammoth



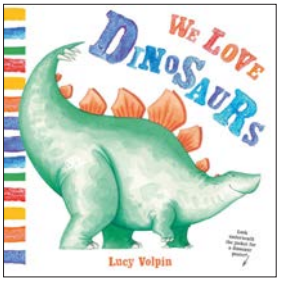
Más te Vale, Mastodonte



Mini Saurio y la Ensalada de Números



Time Flies



We love dinosaurs

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GENERAL SUPPLY KIT



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GENERAL SUPPLY KIT



















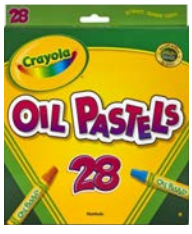












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ASSESSMENT TOOLS



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DIGGING DINOS

Activity Rubric Scale

Student:_____ Class:_____

Date:_____

Activity or Skill:_____

_____

4 **Achieved-** The student frequently demonstrates the ability to apply the knowledge or perform the skill accurately in several environments without support.

3 **Progressing-** The student demonstrates understanding or use of the knowledge or skill in one or more environments with some support.

2 **Emerging-** The student is beginning to show understanding or use of the knowledge or skill in one environment with extensive support. The student is unable to demonstrate the skill without assistance.

1 **Introduced-** The student has been exposed to the knowledge or skill as part of the educational curriculum but demonstrates no measurable understanding of the knowledge or skill at this time.

Notes:_____

_____

_____

_____

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DIGGING DINOS

Anecdotal Note Observation Form

Student:_____ Date:_____ Time:_____

Objective for this observation:

List of others in the context:

Context:

Notes:

Preliminary thoughts regarding observation:

Educator's Signature:_____

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DIGGING DINOS

General Observations

DATE	TIME	SKILL	OBSERVATIONS

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DIGGING DINOS

Picture Portfolio

Student:_____

Date:_____

Learning Center:_____

(Include photo or sample of student's work)

Notes:_____

_____

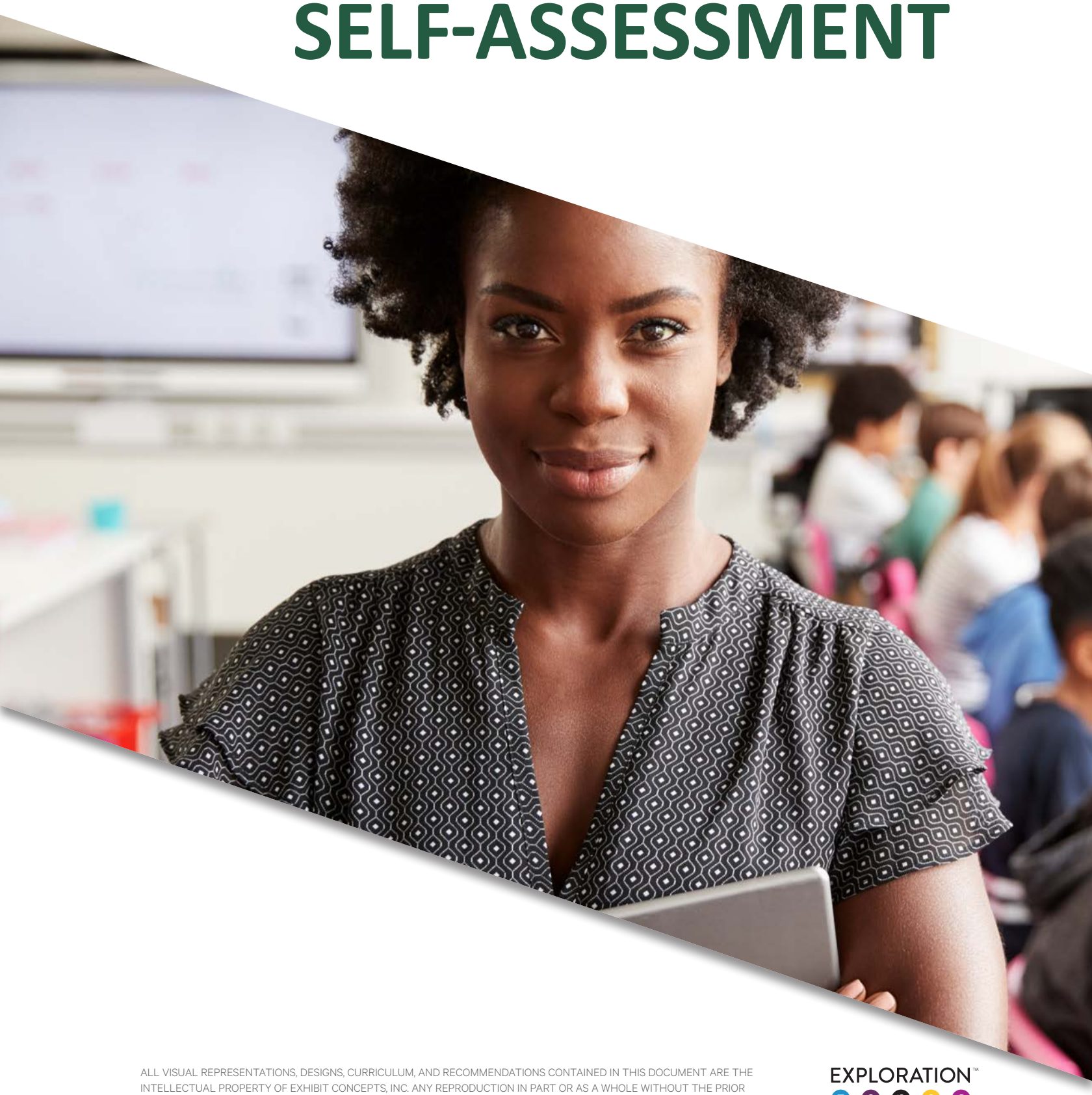
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TEACHER SELF-ASSESSMENT



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DIGGING DINOS

Self-Assessment of Benchmarks of Experiential Education Implementation

Name:_____ School:_____ Date:_____

WHEN I PLAN...	LACKING	EMERGING	PRACTICING
I plan activities and experiences that follow the interests of my students.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I consider multiple learning modalities.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I consider new and novel items to engage students.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
WHEN I TEACH...	**LACKING**	**EMERGING**	**PRACTICING**
I give students choices.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I ask open-ended questions that help students think creatively and critically.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I observe my students.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I identify and respond to the existing knowledge and skills each student brings to an activity or experience.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I help students make connections between existing and new knowledge.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I use developmentally appropriate concepts and vocabulary to introduce new content.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I individually reflect on how to continuously improve my instruction.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
IN MY CLASSROOM...	**LACKING**	**EMERGING**	**PRACTICING**
My students are active in the learning process by:			
• choosing items to engage with and participating in activities that interest them.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• working through problems and activities in real-life situations.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• collaborating with peers, as developmentally appropriate.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• initiating their own investigations.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• asking questions.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• making observations.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
My students recognize and use developmentally appropriate vocabulary and concepts.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
My students are intrinsically motivated.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐

My definition of experiential education is:

I'd like to know more about the following in regard to experiential education:

My strengths:

Areas I'd like to improve upon:

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