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Fossils & Extinction Activity for Kids

Make Your Own Fossil DIY

 Duration: **30-60 min**  Difficulty: **Medium**  Cost: **\$0 to \$10**

Model the formation of a fossil, which provides evidence of past life!

Material List

- 1** Large ball of modeling clay
- 1** Box of plaster of paris powder
- 1** Cup of water
- 1** Paintbrush
- 1** Toy dinosaur
- 1** Pair of non-latex gloves
- 1** Plastic knife not sharp
- 1** Cup of cold coffee optional

Instructions

- 1** Flatten a large ball of clay into an oval that's about half an inch thick.
- 2** Press a toy dinosaur (or any other item) firmly into the clay.
- 3** Remove the toy, leaving a clear imprint in the clay.
- 4** Use the non-sharp knife to cut away the edges of the clay.
- 5** Reuse this clay to build a short wall around the imprint to make a mold.
- 6** Ask an adult to mix water with "plaster of paris" powder (follow directions on the package).
- 7** Pour plaster into the mold to fill it.
- 8** Wait at least 2 hours for the plaster to set (follow directions on the package).
- 9** Gently remove the clay.
- 10** Optional: brush some cold coffee on the surface to make it look real.

How It Works

Real fossils are covered by sediments (mud or sand) and take thousands or millions of years to form. Some fossils are formed when an animal makes an imprint in the sediment and then other sediments settle into that impression to preserve it. The same thing happens in this activity when the plaster fills and preserves the impression of the dinosaur.

