

Multidisciplinary Fossil Timeline

It is important to understand the time line of fossils from a historical perspective. This includes learning about the different pre-historic periods and seeing which fossils appear when. Pre-historic knowledge does not directly appear in any elementary Virginia Standards of Learning. However, such a lesson gives perspective and allows students to synthesize learning. The Carboniferous Period, which can be broken down into two parts, is part of the Paleozoic era. Learning about when the fossils appear helps to further understanding on how they were created from a scientific perspective.

Activity:

Use stations with different academic disciplines featured.

For a social studies emphasis, have students make their own time lines after researching the different periods or simply choose one era or period to emphasize. The more restricted time frame may be more age-appropriate for younger students. When looking at the Carboniferous period or the Paleozoic era students could research the fossils and add in other forms of life that existed beyond the fossil samples they have.

For a language arts station, students might engage in a number of writing activities. They could ask themselves what life would have been like millions of years ago and use personal narrative to explore the idea with a creative writing piece. They may write up their time-line research in a newspaper article.

For a fine arts station, students may create a visual representation of the timeline at any given point. This could take the form of a painting, drawing, sculpture, etc. Each student may want to create a different component that will then be placed on a large class-size timeline.