

## Lesson 1: Mesozoic Era

### Objectives:

1. Students will identify the three Periods of the Mesozoic Era.
2. Students will read for details by placing dinosaurs in a foldable timeline.

### Materials:

- Document: Dinosaur Book Cover (pdf or printed picture)
- Class set of the Document: Mesozoic Era
- Construction paper
- Crayons, markers, color pencils
- Glue sticks and scissors
- Vocabulary Cards (Mesozoic Era, Triassic Period, Jurassic Period, Cretaceous Period)

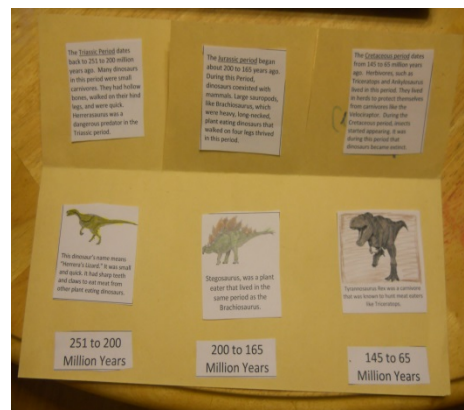
### Procedure:

1. Share the Document: Dinosaur Book Cover with the students. Ask them to describe what they see on the picture. They may say items like the sun, plants, dinosaurs, ocean, trees and volcanoes.
2. Inform them that the illustrations are inaccurate. Ask them to share their thoughts about why it is inaccurate.
3. Share that today, they will learn about the Mesozoic Era and that by the end of the lesson, they should be able to tell you why the picture on the book cover is inaccurate. (*Answer: The illustration shows dinosaurs from the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous Periods as living together. This is inaccurate as certain dinosaurs were alive only during certain periods. The Tyrannosaurus rex was alive during the Cretaceous Period and the Stegosaurus was alive during the Jurassic Period.*)
4. Distribute the document Document: Mesozoic Era and one piece of construction paper to each student.
5. Students will fold the construction paper landscape—with 2/3 to 1/3 ratios. They will cut three, equal flaps on the shorter flap and they will label the flaps: Triassic Period, Jurassic Period, and Cretaceous Period.
6. Explain to them that they will read the descriptions and cut and paste them in the appropriate period.

Outside Flap



Inside Flap



7. Revisit the Dinosaur Book Cover and ask the students again why the picture is inaccurate. *Based on the foldable they created, students should be able to tell you that the Tyrannosaurus rex lived during the Cretaceous Period and the Stegosaurus lived during the Jurassic Period. The illustration shows dinosaurs from the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous Periods as living together. This is inaccurate as certain dinosaurs were alive only during certain periods.*
8. Explain that although the Periods are all part of the Mesozoic Era, the Periods were different in many ways. They had different climates, which affected the plants that lived or died. This led to the different dinosaurs who either adapted or died during the period.

**Extension Ideas:**

1. Integrate technology and allow the students to use computers to research the dinosaurs that lived during the Mesozoic Era. Working together, they can create a poster with the information they have learned. Make sure to label the dinosaurs, include illustrations and the Period in which they lived.
2. KLRN PBS LearningMedia:  
<http://klrn.pbslearningmedia.org>  
On PBS LearningMedia, search for: Mammals Get Their Chance. It is a brief video explaining how mammals evolved after the Mesozoic Era.