

Lesson 1: Paleontology

Objective:

1. Students will learn about paleontology and what they can do to prepare for a career as a paleontologist.

Materials:

- **Dinosaurs PowerPoint** or printed picture
- Class set of the **Document: Paleontology Career** (double-sided)
- Pencils

Procedure:

1. Show the class the **Dinosaur PowerPoint** slide or printed picture, one at a time. Ask the students if they can identify the dinosaurs. They are pictures of: *Triceratops*, *Velociraptor*, *Brachiosaurus*, and *Tyrannosaurus rex*.
2. Ask your students, "What do you know about these dinosaurs?" Write their responses on the board. Students may share information like: if they are carnivores or omnivores, their height, or when they lived.
3. Ask your students, "What is the formal name for scientists who study dinosaurs?" Answer: *Paleontologists*.
4. Share with the students that they are going to learn about what paleontologists do and steps they can take if they are interested in a career as a paleontologist.
5. Distribute the **Document: Paleontology Career** to each student. Students will read the passage and complete the accompanying page of questions to capture the information they have learned.

Extension Ideas:

1. KLRN PBS LearningMedia:
<http://klrn.pbslearningmedia.org>
On PBS LearningMedia, search for: **Scientist Profile: Paleontologist**. It is a short video depicting paleontologist Gary Takeuchi as he searches for fossils in the Mojave Desert in California.
2. Offer the students the opportunity to research different careers in the field of paleontology (i.e. paleobotany and taphonomy).