

NGSS Standard: 3-LS4-1



Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like a park ranger and analyze fossils found in a national park.



Activity Teacher Note: This activity can be done across 2 days. Step 1 and 2 on Day 1 and Step 3 and 4 on Day 2

Step 1: Background on Fossils (5-10 minutes)

- Show [Video: Park Discoveries](#).
- Explain to students that a park ranger protects state and national parks. Sometimes, park rangers make new discoveries, like finding fossils! Sometimes, park rangers make new discoveries, like finding fossils! Fossils are bones or preserved imprints of plants and animals from thousands of years ago.
- Ask students what a fossil could tell a park ranger about an area thousands of years ago.
- Show [Handout: Information on Fossils](#). As a class, discuss how a fossil provides information on what organisms and environments were like a long time ago. For example, fossils can tell us what animals and plants lived then, the climate and weather of the area, or if the area was dramatically different than it is now.

Step 2: Creating A Fossil (15 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will analyze fossils, just like a park ranger. This project can be done individually or in small groups.
- Provide students with [Handout: Steps to Analyze Fossils](#). As a class, discuss the steps.
- For Step 1 and 2, have students read [Handout: Information on Parks](#), and then have students choose a park that they will make a fossil for. Make sure groups do not share what park they chose with other groups.
- For Step 3, have students use art and building supplies to make a fossil that could be found in the park they chose.

Please contact Allison Bischoff, Director of Customer Service, at allison@rozzylearningcompany.com or 314-272-2560 with questions.

Park Ranger: Park Discoveries

Step 3: Designing the Park (10 minutes)

- Next, have students design the area that the fossil is currently found in. Provide students with art and building supplies, as well as natural materials like grass, sticks, and leaves.
- You can use a box or a tray for the students to create their parks in or on top of.
- When students are finished with their parks, have students place their fossils in the park.

Steps 4: Guessing Where Fossils Came From (5-10 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will switch parks and fossils with another person or group in the class. They will make observations of the fossil and guess where it came from.
- Provide students with [Handout: Making Observations](#). Read through directions as a class.
- Have students spend 5-10 minutes filling out their handouts.
- When students are finished, have them tell their partner what fossil they think was created and see if they were correct!

Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: Park Discoveries
- Handout: Information on Fossils
- Handout: Steps to Analyze Fossils
- Handout: Information on Parks
- Handout: Making Observations

Not provided (each student/group needs):

- Art supplies and building materials
- Box or cardboard tray (one for each student)
- Natural materials (sand, dirt, grass, sticks, leaves)

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