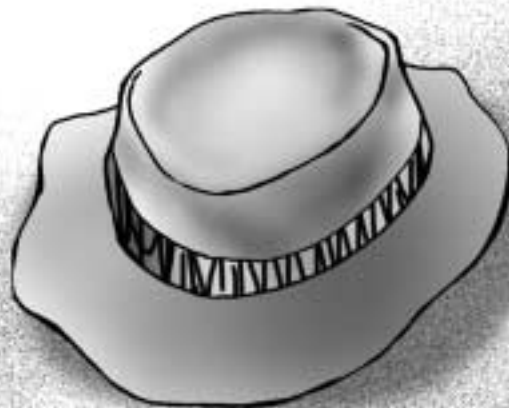


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# Dinosaur Dig

*Discover Dinosaurs: Becoming a Dinosaur Detective* by Chris McGowan, Royal Ontario Museum Book, Addison-Wesley, 1992.

Information about paleontologists with interesting activities for children to try.

*Gigantic: How Big Were the Dinosaurs?* by Patrick O'Brien, Henry Holt, 1999.

Dinosaurs are compared to modern things.

*My Visit to the Dinosaurs (Let's Read and Find Out)* by Alik, HarperTrophy, 1985.

An introduction to dinosaurs through a visit to a natural history museum.

*National Geographic Dinosaurs* by Paul M. Barrett, National Geographic Society, 2001.

Provides a lushly illustrated comprehensive book on just about anything young readers might need on the subject of dinosaurs.

*Oxford First Book of Dinosaurs* by Barbara Taylor, Oxford University Press, 2001.

Highly pictorial work with simple text and basic information.

*Inside Dinosaurs and Other Pre-Historic Creatures* by Steve Parker, Doubleday Books, 1993.

Cutaway drawings show every detail of a variety of dinosaurs.

*The Search for Dinosaurs* by Dougal Dixon, Thomson Learning, 1995.

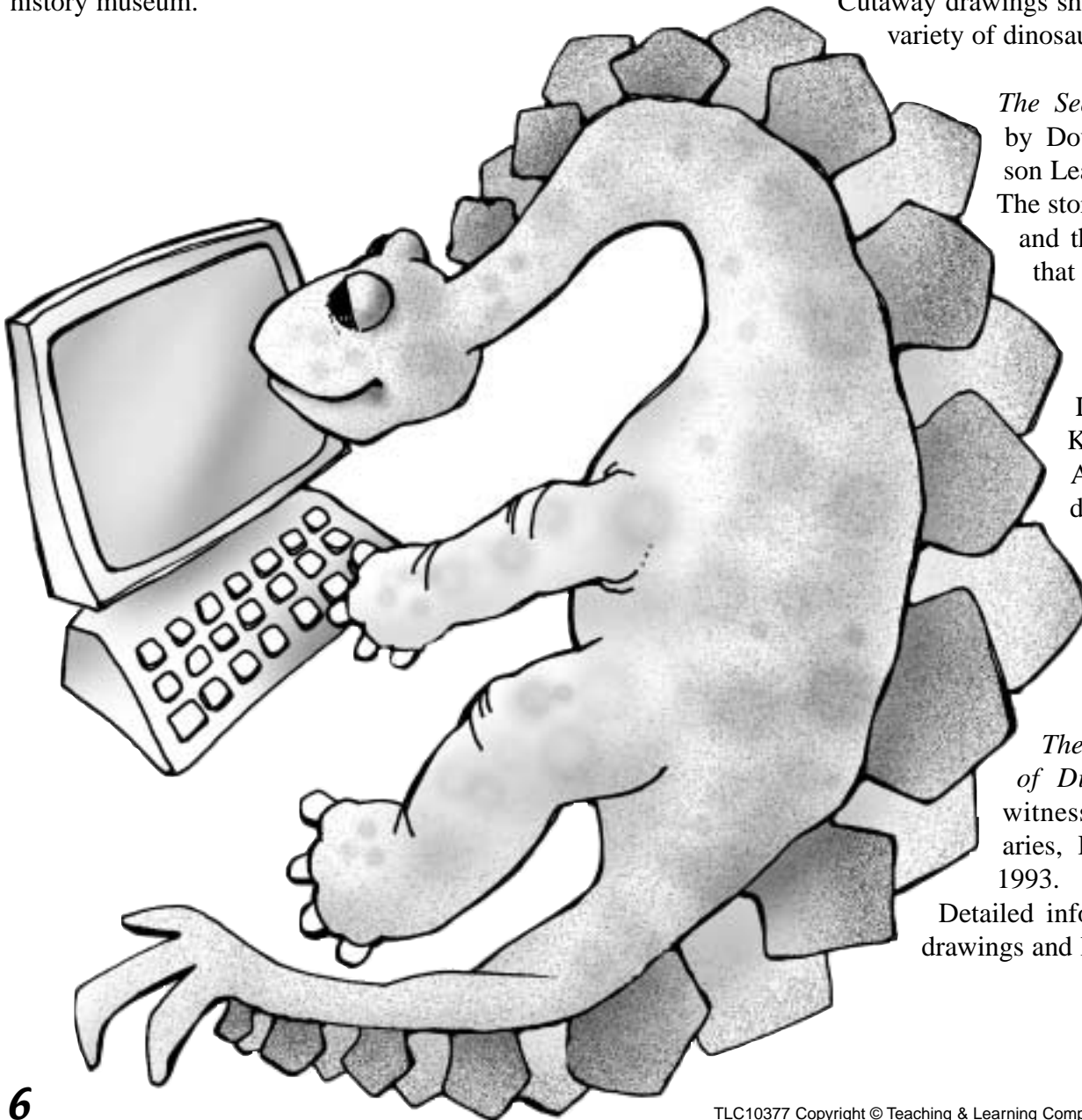
The story of early scientists and the great discoveries that continue today.

*The Ultimate Dinosaur Book* by David Lambert, Dorling Kindersley, 1993.

A complete guide to dinosaurs from A to Z with information on where they were found, skeletons, size and much more.

*The Visual Dictionary of Dinosaurs, An Eye-witness Visual Dictionaries*, Dorling Kindersley, 1993.

Detailed information with clear drawings and less text.



# Dinosaur Dig

## What Is a Dinosaur?

Most of us think of dinosaurs as huge, scary animals who ruled the Earth many years ago and then mysteriously disappeared. We may have seen dinosaur bones displayed in a museum. We may have watched a movie with terrifying creatures chasing each other or even people. Or we may think of a cuddly children's character that sings and dances on morning television.

## Chart

To begin a meaningful study of dinosaurs, it is useful to brainstorm a list of information that children have about dinosaurs.

### Materials

chart paper  
markers  
chart stand  
masking tape

Mount the chart paper on the chart stand. On the top of the first page of paper print: *What do we know about dinosaurs?* Gather the children in a group where they can see the chart. Read the question aloud and ask the children to share what they know about dinosaurs. Write the responses under the chart title. Print each child's name beside each suggestion. Continue until each child has had an opportunity to make a suggestion.

Make a second chart, and on the top of the paper, print: *What do we want to learn about dinosaurs?* Read the question aloud, and ask the children to share some things they would like to learn about dinosaurs. Write the responses under the chart title. Print each child's name beside each suggestion. Continue until each child has had an opportunity to make a suggestion. Mount the two charts in the classroom where children can refer to them throughout the unit. As children learn new information, record it onto the first chart. Or, as new questions are uncovered, add them to the second chart.

## Misconceptions

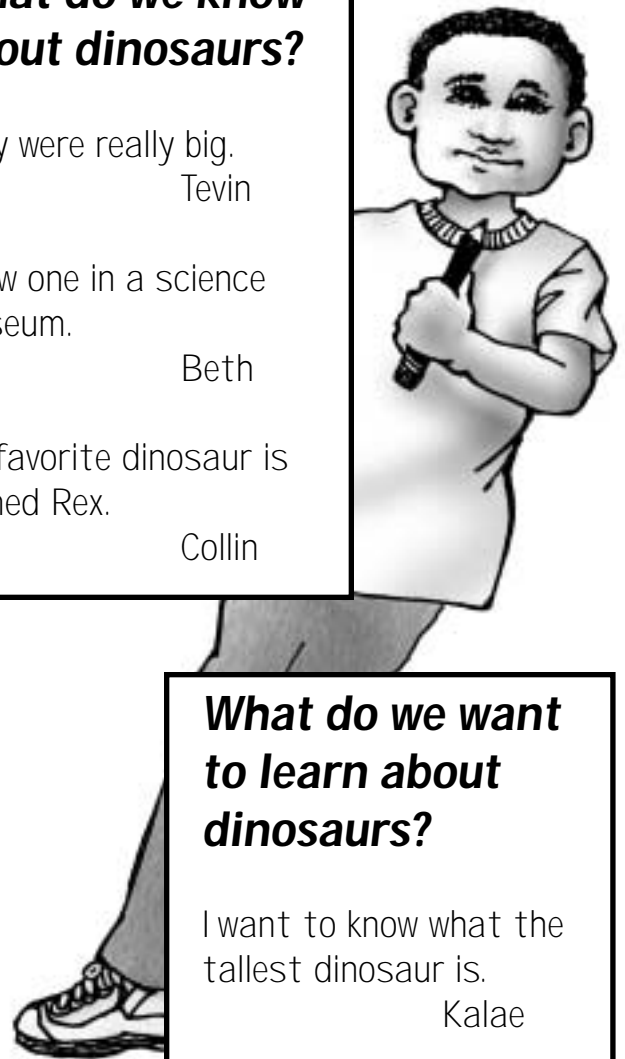
You may discover children have some misconceptions about dinosaurs when you do this activity. It is OK. Part of the work of scientists and paleontologists is sorting out the misconceptions. Early paleontologists made mistakes about how they reconstructed dinosaur bones. Through additional work, they discovered their misconceptions. As the unit progresses, children will find their own misconceptions. Add the newfound information to the charts.

### What do we know about dinosaurs?

They were really big.  
Tevin

I saw one in a science museum.  
Beth

My favorite dinosaur is named Rex.  
Collin



### What do we want to learn about dinosaurs?

I want to know what the tallest dinosaur is.  
Kalae

Who digs up the bones?  
Drake

# Dinosaur Dig

## Dinosauria

The scientific name for *dinosaur* is *Dinosauria*. It means “a diverse group of animals, which had many different ways of living.” A scientist, Sir Richard Owen, invented the term in 1842 to describe what he called “fearfully great reptiles.” They lived millions of years ago during the Mesozoic Era, sometimes called the “Age of Reptiles.”

Dinosaurs dominated the Earth for more than 165 million years, but became extinct more than 65 million years ago, at the end of the Cretaceous Period. There are many theories about why dinosaurs became extinct. Some scientists believe that the meat-eaters ate all of the plant-eaters and then starved themselves. Others think changes in the weather may have wiped out all of the dinosaurs when their habitats changed. One newer theory is that a large asteroid crashed into the Earth, causing a cloud that killed plants and animals alike.

Some scientists believe that birds are descendants of dinosaurs, and thus the dinosaurs really live among us today!

## My Time Line

To help children understand a time line of the dinosaurs, allow them to first make a time line showing all of the important events in their own lives.

### Materials

- paper
- pencils
- index cards
- tape
- glue sticks
- magazines
- markers

Provide each child with a sheet of paper. Ask them to number their papers from 1 to the number of their age. (If a child is 10 years old, he or she should number to 10.) Beside each number, ask the children to write down a significant event that happened during that year. It may be helpful to brainstorm ideas of things that often happen in a person’s life, or send the project home and ask parents to help.

Provide each child with the same number of index cards as he or she has numbered on the paper, one index card for each year. Transfer the information from the paper onto each of the index cards. Add illustrations by cutting out pictures from magazines that represent the events on their time line. Use markers to add drawings.

Ask children to tape their index cards together in order. Mount the time lines where others can view them.

