



Educational/Classroom Activities

Underwater Diorama

Materials Needed:

Shoebox Index Cards String Modeling clay (optional) Scissors and glue Construction paper

Activity:

Select two or more animals and design an underwater diorama to showcase their habitat. Use a shoebox lined with blue paper and hang construction paper or papier-mâché animals with string, or use an aquarium actually filled with water and make the creatures out of lightweight modeling clay. Attach descriptive fact cards about habitat and physical features to the back or top of the container.

Prehistoric Mobiles

Materials Needed:

Wire coat hangers Construction paper or cardboard String Dowel rods

Activity:

Select five or six animals. Make cardboard, clay, or pipe cleaner models, and create a mobile from a clothes hanger or dowel rods. Write interesting facts directly on the models, or hang companion fact cards with each animal.

Cretaceous Composer

Materials Needed:

Background accompaniment music (optional) Rhythm instruments Props

Activity:

Compose a song or rap, describing one of the creatures from the exhibit. Write new lyrics for a familiar tune (Battle Hymn, Under the Sea, or Jingle Bells.) Use drums, sticks, or other rhythm instruments to accompany the performance of the song. Create a shape poem or haiku to describe one of the creatures. Use the outline of the animal to structure the poem, or write a haiku with accompanying illustrations and roll the finished paper like a scroll.

DINOS OF THE DEEP



DIVE INTO PREHISTORIC SEAS

Diary of an Explorer

Materials Needed:

Paper and pen (parchment paper optional) Construction paper

Activity:

Create a diary of an underwater explorer who time travels to the world of the Cretaceous sea animals. Enter daily logs, with exciting descriptive events that educate the reader about the animals. Use parchment paper to give the diary a worn antique look.

News Flash

Materials:

Newsprint paper Sample Newspapers Research materials (encyclopedias, internet)

Activity:

Research several of the animals and write news stories, with front page headlines and editorials. Include artwork or “photos” with descriptive captions. Divide teams of students into editors, weather reporters, gossip columnists, photographers, cartoonists, etc.

Cretaceous Crossword

Materials Needed:

Paper and pencil Ruler Research materials (creature vocabulary list)

Activity:

Use ten of the animals to construct a crossword puzzle. For definitions, use one or two descriptive words that relate to each animal. Fit the puzzle inside of a creature outline.

Mysterious Endings

Materials:

Paper and pencil

Activity:

Research current theories about the extinction of dinosaurs and sea creatures. Rewrite the story of how they might have met their demise. Come up with a new theory explaining what happened during their final years.

DINOS OF THE DEEP



DIVE INTO PREHISTORIC SEAS

How Big Were They?

Materials Needed:

Graph paper Calculator Ruler

Activity:

Design a collage of creatures comparing their sizes to items in today's world. Next to each animal drawing, place a magazine cutout or drawing to show relative sizes. Use large objects such as houses and trucks; determine their average sizes, and draw the creature to scale. Label the actual sizes of the objects as well as the animals. Be sure to indicate the scale ratio used.

Creature Scale

Materials Needed:

Graph paper Calculator Ruler

Activity:

Using graph paper, draw several creatures to scale, with each square representing specific meters or feet. Label each animal with its name and its actual size. Include the scale ratio used.

Create a Creature

Materials Needed:

Greek and Latin Descriptor list (included below) Pencil and paper Drawing paper or modeling clay

Activity:

Find the meaning of the animal names using the Greek and Latin descriptor list. Create ten new names using the list and write the names on paper. Use two or more descriptors for each. Choose one of the new names and draw or model that animal to fit the name. Write an accompanying paragraph describing the creature, its physical characteristics, behavior, and habitat.

Greek and Latin Descriptor List

Animal Parts

arm	brachio-
beak	rostr- rhyncho-
claw	ungui- chelo- onycho-
finger	datyl- stenotes
foot	pedi- podo- elmi pos pes
head	capit- cephalo- top
horned	cornut- cera-
jaw	gnathus
nose	rhino-
skin	derm
tail	caud- cerco- luro
toes	phalangia
tooth	denti- odonto- don den
winged	ptero

Textures

bare	nudi- gymno-
bearded	criniti- pogono-
hairy	hirsut- lasio- trichodo-
lumpy	nodo
plated	elasmo
ridged	lopho
rough	asper- trachy-
sharp	angusti
spiked	canthus echino
spiny	spini- acantho- echino-
wooly	lana
wrinkled	corrugat- rugos-

Numbers

one	mono- uni-
two	bi- duo- di-
three	tri- tria-
four	quadri- tetra-
five	penta-
seven	septem- hepta-
ten	decim- deca-
many	pola- poly-
single	mono-

Sizes

dwarf	pumili- nano
gigantic	ingenti- colosso-
heavy	baro-
huge	mega-
large	grandi- macro- mega-
short	brevi- brachy
tall	proceri- alti- aepe-

Shapes

curved	Cyrto-; gampso-
egg-shaped	ovot-
flat	Plani-; platy-; placo-; plateo-
hollow	cavi- coelo
narrow	steneo
round	Circuli-; cyclo-; gyro-
slender	lepto

Colors

black	atri- nigri- melano-
blue	cerule- cyano-
green	viridi- chloro-
white	albi- leuco-
yellow	flav- xantho-

Other

alarming	tarbo
beast	thero
bird	ornitho-
deceptive	apato-
fast	velox veloci
fearsome	phobo
good mother	maia
iguana	iguano
king	rex
lizard	saurus
mimic	mimus

mixed	hetero-
no, not	a ar and
ostrich	stuthio
pointed	mucro
pretty	compso
reptile	saurus
robber	lestes
roofed	stego
running	dromaeo
shaped	morpho
sloping	preno

slow	segno
speedy	velox veloci
strange	allo
terrible	deino
thick	pachy
thief	raptor
top	acro-
thunder	bronto
twin	stereo
tyrant	tyranno-
wounding	drypto

DINOS OF THE DEEP



DIVE INTO PREHISTORIC SEAS

Mini-Dig Sites

Materials Needed:

Plastic bins or boxes Sand Hand shovels paint brushes Small objects to bury in the sand String

Activity:

Use plastic bins or boxes to create a mini dig site for each team of students. In each box, layer sand with small artifacts, bones, or other items. Students can section off the box with string to create quadrants in which to search for clues to what might have lived in that area. Students then write a short description of the person, culture, or creature they discovered by relating the artifacts to particular activities that might have occurred.

Trading Cards

Materials Needed:

Index cards (un-ruled) Markers Creature images downloaded from web sites (optional)

Activity:

Design a set of sea creature trading cards. On one side of each card, draw the animal (or paste the downloaded image) and on the other side, list facts about the animal, with the animal's scientific name. Use the cards to play a memory matching game, as flash cards, or have students design an original game.

Classroom Museum

Materials:

Construction paper markers and variety of art supplies Graph paper Meter sticks

Activity:

Design a classroom museum to display prehistoric underwater animals. Make a floor plan, using graph paper, to determine the placement of the specimens. Have teams of students be responsible for particular models, making sure that they are constructed in correct proportions. Include signage to educate about each animal. Hang the models from the ceiling at various heights. Compose brochures to explain the exhibit, and invite parents and other classes to visit.