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Student Reading

Making a Fossilized Dinosaur Nest



Dinosaur Nest

Scientists believe that most dinosaurs reproduced by laying eggs. Female dinosaurs laid their eggs in nests dug in sand or mud. The eggs were laid in a circle one on top of the other. Each dinosaur laid at least 15 eggs. The size of the eggs were small compared to the huge size of some of the dinosaurs. The largest egg ever found was ten inches (25 cm) long.

Dinosaur Eggs

Just like all other eggs, the eggs of dinosaurs were small and easy to break. Most dinosaur nests have been destroyed by heavy sand or mud over millions of years. But, many nests have been discovered that have complete fossilized eggs in them with the embryos of small dinosaur hatchlings inside.

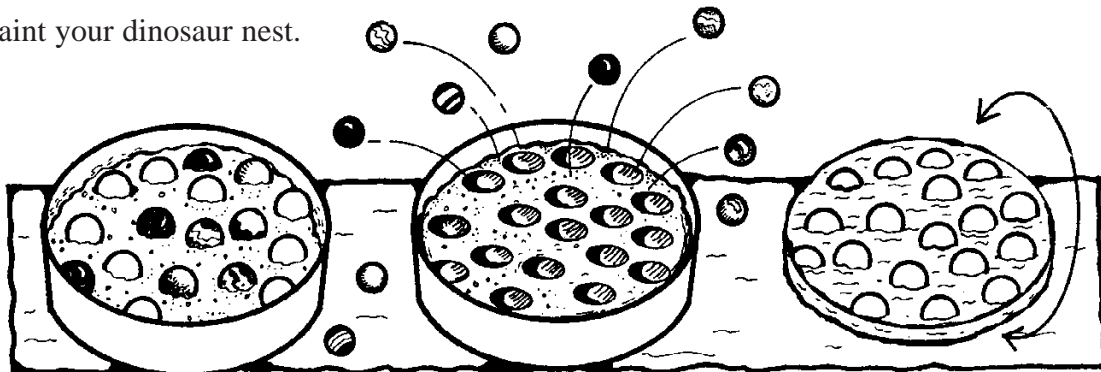
Activity Directions

Making a Fossilized Dinosaur Nest

Materials: modeling clay, plaster of Paris, paint, 9 or 10 marbles, water, paintbrush, lid from 1/2 gallon ice cream carton

Directions:

1. Take small amount of clay. Flatten the clay so that it is about as thick as your finger.
2. Press the clay into the ice cream lid so that it completely covers the bottom.
3. Press the marbles firmly into the clay, so that they press against the bottom of the lid.
4. Remove the marbles from the clay to leave empty spaces.
5. Pour plaster of Paris into the lid until it covers the empty spaces. Let the plaster of Paris dry and harden.
6. After it dries, remove the lid and flip it over so that the prints of the marbles show where they were pressed into the clay.
7. Paint your dinosaur nest.



Dinosaur Defenses

Dinosaurs just like all other animals depend on plants and other animals for food. All dinosaurs had special characteristics that helped them survive.

Read the descriptions of Dino Defenses. Cut out the pictures of the dinosaurs at the bottom of the page and glue them in place to match the descriptions.

Dino Defenses

1. Hard, shell-like plates, much like a turtle shell, covered their body. Some had huge, bony club tails to swing and hit predators.	2. Long, sharp horns on its head and nose were lowered to face the enemy. A bony shield protected its neck from a predator's bite.	3. A thick, bone-like helmet, with sharp spikes sticking out, completely covered its head. It probably lowered its head and rammed the enemy as protection.
4. A sharp, spiked tail to swing in the direction of a predator and hard, bony plates running from head to tail helped to protect it from harm.	5. Six inch long, sharp teeth in a huge mouth and very sharp claws on hands and feet helped it hold and kill prey quickly.	6. The enormous size of the dinosaur along with its long, whip-like tail was enough to protect it against carnivores.

