

28.1.21

T: Can I find out about Mary Anning?

If you have been completing the daily reading with questions on Purple Mash, you will have heard of Mary Anning already!

Palaeontology and Palaeontologists

Key words to learn!

Palaeontology

(pay-lee-on-to-lo-gee)

Palaeontologist

(pay-lee-on-to-lo-jist)

What could a palaeontologist be?

What would a palaeontologist do?

Use your previous learning in this unit to help you work it out.

History of Ideas About Fossils

Fossils have been found by people throughout history.

It's only in the last two hundred years that we have begun to understand what these fossils really are and how they formed.



Here are some ideas from the past.



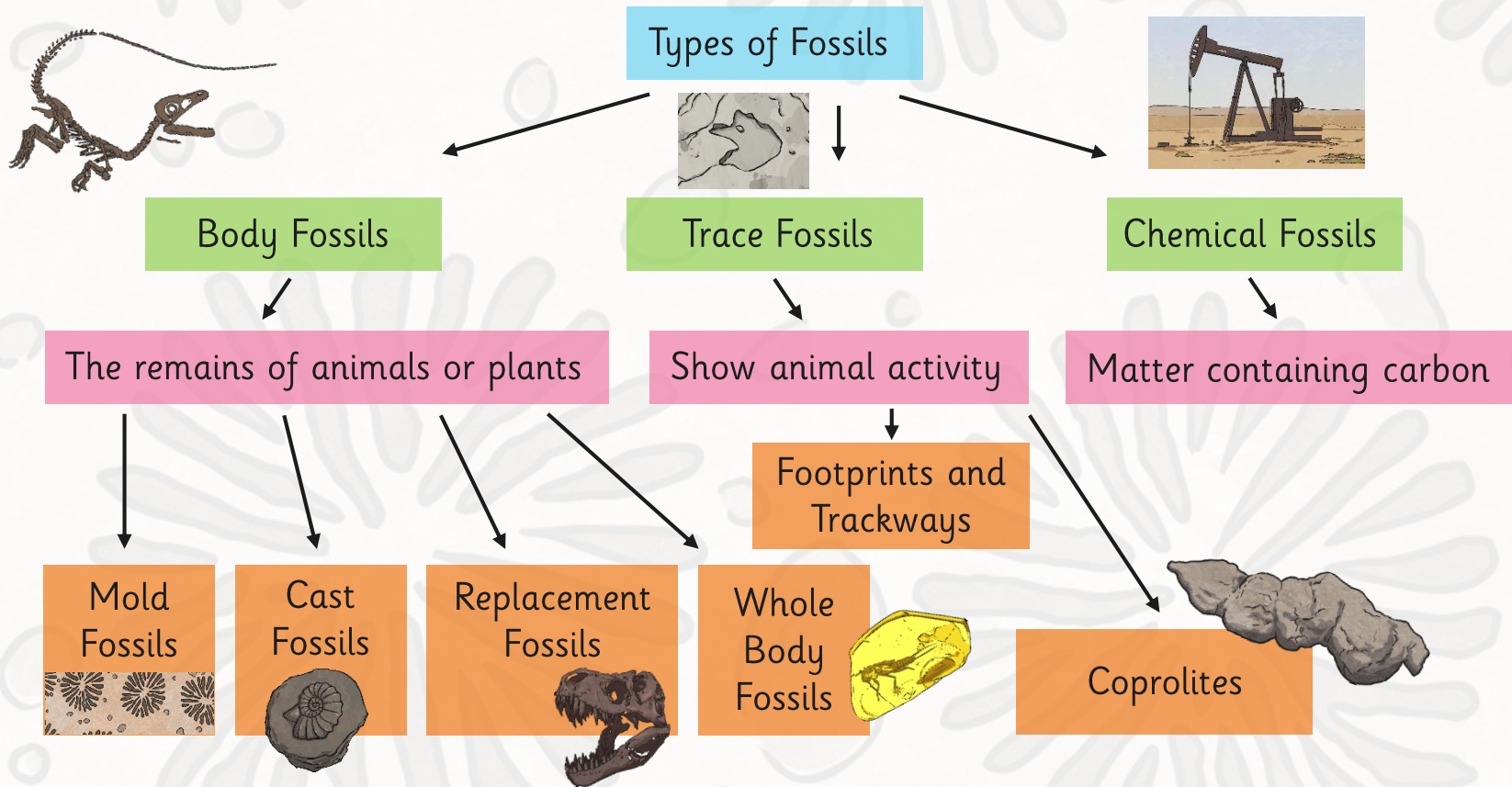
We ancient Greeks found fossils of marine animals. We realised that this meant some land used to be under water.

In ancient China, we found many fossils of dinosaurs although these were mistaken for dragon bones! Some people even used them in medicines!



Types of Fossils

Last week we looked at the fossilisation process.
Do you remember all these types of fossils?



Mary Anning

So who was Mary Anning and what did she find that was so important?

There is a video link on the website and on Teams to explain about Mary's life. As you watch the video, think about the questions below.

What have you learnt about Mary Anning?

What types of fossils did she find?

How did she learn about fossils?

Why were her finds so important?

Why do you think she was not credited with finding the fossils?



Mary Anning and Palaeontology

The area where she collected her fossils is now known as the Jurassic Coast, due to the large number of pre-historic sea creatures found in that area.

She didn't chance upon the fossils. She realised that they were found at the Blue Lias cliffs.

These cliffs are made from layers of shale and limestone which formed over 200 million years ago!

As with all discoveries, there is an element of chance. Mary Anning lived in Lyme Regis. However, Mary Anning was an expert fossil hunter!



TASK: Read the text and answer the questions about Mary Anning and palaeontology. You can decide whether you choose the task with support, or the trickier task, from the website, or on Teams.

Palaeontology Reading Comprehension Question Sheet

Read the Palaeontology Reading Comprehension and then answer the following questions.

Q1. What are palaeontologists?

Q2. What kind of animals lived millions of years ago?

Q3. What does the word 'extinct' mean?

Q4. Why did Mary Anning go fossil hunting when it was not always safe?

Q5. What do modern palaeontologists do to keep safe?

Q6. Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included?

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Science Year 3 (Fossils) Mary Anning Lesson 4

Palaeontology Reading Comprehension

Read through this reading comprehension and answer questions on the answer sheet.

Fossil Hunting Then and Now

Palaeontology has come a long way since Mary Anning's time.

We now know that there were animals who lived millions of years ago, the most fascinating of which are the dinosaurs!

We understand more about dinosaurs, how they might have looked, what they ate and how they lived.

It is thought that the dinosaurs became extinct due to a falling asteroid. The impact of the asteroid was so huge that it changed the climate (weather) around the world.

The climate became colder and the dinosaurs were unable to survive.

Finding fossils was, and still is, a dangerous activity. Falling rocks, slippery and sometimes unstable surfaces mean that it is necessary to take precautions when finding fossils.

Mary Anning narrowly missed being killed by a landslide (where lots of rocks fall at once from the cliff). Unfortunately her dog was buried underneath the rocks and died as a result.

Modern palaeontologists don't often go out searching for fossils like Mary Anning did. They search existing sites where fossils have been found. They take safety precautions, like wearing a hard hat and checking the times of tides, so they don't become isolated in remote locations.

New fossil sites are usually found by accident by people who are not palaeontologists at all.

Did You Know?

Not all dinosaurs are dead! All the birds (including chickens) that are alive today are related to those dinosaurs! Even the dinosaurs that did not fly, like the T-Rex, have similarities with modern birds, including hollow bones!



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Extra challenge:

Would you want
to be a
palaeontologist?

Why? Why not?

