



# Palaeontology Reading Comprehension

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

We have learned a lot from palaeontologists:

We know that there were animals who lived millions of years ago, including the dinosaurs!

Dinosaurs became extinct due to a falling asteroid. When the asteroid fell it caused the climate (weather) to change.

The climate became colder and the dinosaurs were not able to survive.

## Fossil Hunting Then and Now

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 was almost killed by a landslide (where lots of rocks fall at once from the cliff). Unfortunately her dog Trey did die.

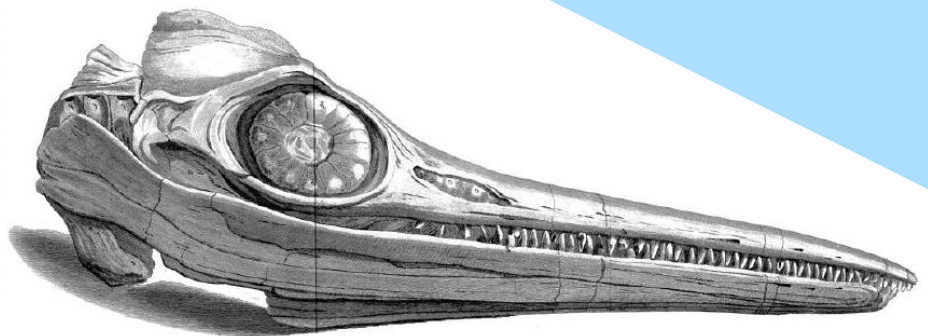
Now, palaeontologists search where fossils have already been found.

They keep safe by, for example, wearing hard hats.

New fossils are usually found by accident by people who are just out having fun at the beach or going for a walk!

## Did You Know?

Not all dinosaurs are dead. All the birds (including chickens) that are alive today are related to the dinosaurs!





# Palaeontology Reading Comprehension Question Sheet



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

Q1: What are palaeontologists?

Palaeontologists are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.2: What kind of animals lived millions of years ago?

Millions of years ago \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.3: What does the word 'extinct' mean?

The word extinct means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.4: Explain why fossil hunting can be dangerous:

Fossil hunting can be dangerous because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.5: Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included?

The 'Did You Know?' box has been included \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Palaeontology Reading Comprehension Answer Sheet

## General Year 3 and 4 Reading Objectives covered:

Understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:

- checking that the text makes sense to them and explaining the meaning of words in context
- identifying main ideas drawn from more than 1 paragraph and summarising these

Retrieve and record information from non-fiction

Q.1: What are palaeontologists? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

Palaeontologists are people who study fossils.

Q.2: What kind of animals lived millions of years ago? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

Dinosaurs.

Q.3: What does the word 'extinct' mean? (explaining the meaning of words in context)

The word extinct means died out / no longer alive.

Q.4: Explain why fossil hunting can be dangerous:: (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

Fossil hunting can be dangerous because of (at least one of the following should be in the answer):

- falling rocks
- slippery surfaces
- unstable surfaces

Q.5: Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included? (identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning)

The 'Did You Know?' box has been included (at least one of the following should be in the answer):

- to give extra information (about dinosaurs)
- to present an interesting fact
- to highlight unusual facts or ideas
- to present information you may not know



# Palaeontology Reading Comprehension

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

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.

## Fossil Hunting Then and Now

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.

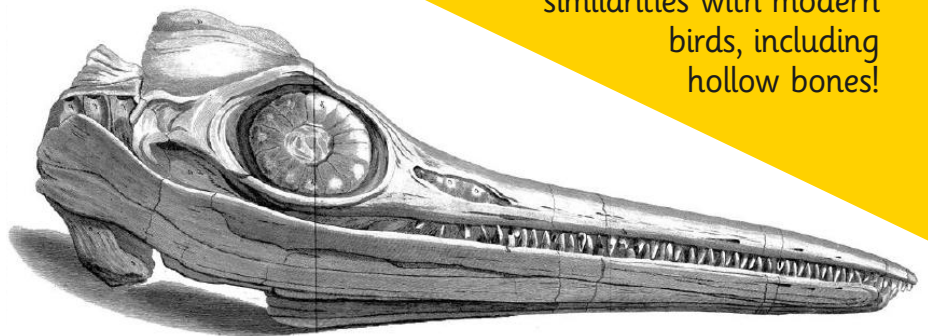
Mary Anning narrowly missed being killed by a landslide (where lots of rocks fall at once from the cliff). Unfortunately her dog Trey was buried underneath the rocks and died as a result.

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 fossils 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!





# Palaeontology Reading Comprehension Question Sheet



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

Q1: What are palaeontologists?

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Q.2: What kind of animals lived millions of years ago?

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Q.3: What does the word 'extinct' mean?

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Q.4: Why did Mary Anning go fossil hunting when it was not always safe?

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Q.5: What do modern palaeontologists do to keep safe?

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Q.6: Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included?

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## General Year 3 and 4 Reading Objectives covered:

Understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:

- checking that the text makes sense to them and explaining the meaning of words in context
- identifying main ideas drawn from more than 1 paragraph and summarising these
- identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning
- drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Retrieve and record information from non-fiction

Q1: What are palaeontologists? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

Palaeontologists are people who study fossils.

Q.2: What kind of animals lived millions of years ago? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

Dinosaurs.

Q.3: What does the word 'extinct' mean? (explaining the meaning of words in context)

The word extinct means died out / no longer alive.

Q.4: Why did Mary Anning go fossil hunting when it was not always safe? (drawing inferences such as motives from their actions)

Answers should be related to one of the following:

- Enjoyment – loved / liked fossil hunting
- Employment / Money
- Important fossil finds
- Best time to go fossil hunting was after a storm
- She was experienced at fossil hunting and knew how to keep safe

Q.5: What do modern palaeontologists do to keep safe? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

Wear a hard hat, check the times of tides.

Q.6: Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included? (identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning)

The 'Did You Know?' box has been included (at least one of the following should be in the answer):

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## Fossil Hunting Then and Now

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.

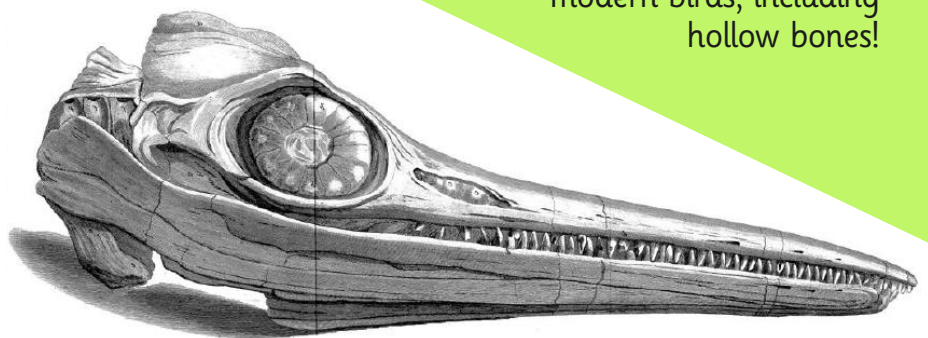
Mary Anning narrowly missed being killed by a landslide (where lots of rocks fall at once from the cliff). Unfortunately her dog Trey was buried underneath the rocks and died as a result.

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 fossils sites are usually found by accident by people who are not palaeontologists at all!

## Did You Know?

Not all dinosaurs are dead! The avian (flying) dinosaurs did not all die out. 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!



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!

Thanks to palaeontologists 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.

This is supported by evidence of a thin layer of sedimentary rock around the world which contains the metal iridium. This metal is rarely found in the Earth's crust but is very common in asteroids.

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



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Q1: What are palaeontologists?

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Q.2: What does the word 'extinct' mean?

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Q.3: What evidence is there that climate change was caused by an asteroid?

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Q.4: What are the similarities and differences between early palaeontologists like Mary Anning and modern palaeontologists?

Similarities	Differences

Q.5: Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included?

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Q.2: What does the word 'extinct' mean? (explaining the meaning of words in context)

The word extinct means died out / no longer alive.

Q.3: What evidence is there that climate change was caused by an asteroid? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

There is a thin layer of rock which contains the metal iridium which is rare on earth but common in asteroids.

Q.4: What are the similarities and differences between early palaeontologists like Mary Anning and modern palaeontologists? (retrieve and record information from non-fiction)

At least one answer in each box.

Similarities	Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Study fossils</li><li>• Work out what the fossils tell us about prehistoric animals.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety precautions taken</li><li>• Finding new fossils / fossil sites</li><li>• Modern palaeontologists have more information about prehistoric animals.</li></ul>

Q.5: Why has a 'Did You Know?' box been included? (identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning)

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- to highlight unusual facts or ideas
- to present information you may not know