

## We Dig Dinosaurs Facilitated Program

**Overview:** Become a palaeontologist for the day! Brush, chip and sort your way through a variety of hands-on activities, just like a real fossil finder. Investigate how fossils reveal the secrets from life as it was millions of years ago.

**Duration:** One hour facilitated experience with a Museum Education Officer.  
Please allow additional time for self-guided gallery exploration.

### What your class will experience:

- Uncover a large fossil buried under sand.
- Use tools to excavate a fossil from rock.
- Reconstruct a dinosaur skeleton.
- Identify real fossils.
- Learn types of fossils.

### Excursion Booking and Enquiries:

For enquiries and bookings please contact:

Western Australian Museum – Geraldton  
Education

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### Curriculum

#### Science

#### Life and Living

*Students understand their own biology and that of other living things and recognise the interdependence of life.*

#### Key Messages

1. By investigating fossils, we can identify, compare and contrast various aspects of a dinosaur's habitat, diet and behaviour.
2. The physical features and behaviours of dinosaurs enabled them to survive in their environment.



## At the Museum

### Facilitated Program

One hour

The facilitated component of *We Dig Dinosaurs* takes place in one of the Museum's learning spaces. It is a hands-on, interactive experience where the class rotates through five activity stations based on the students becoming 'junior palaeontologists'.

**Please have your students split into five groups for this experience. Each group will require one adult supervisor to assist them with the activities.**

Please allow for time to explore the galleries before or after your facilitated program.

### Related Museum Resources

#### Planning Your Excursion



Excursion Management Plan

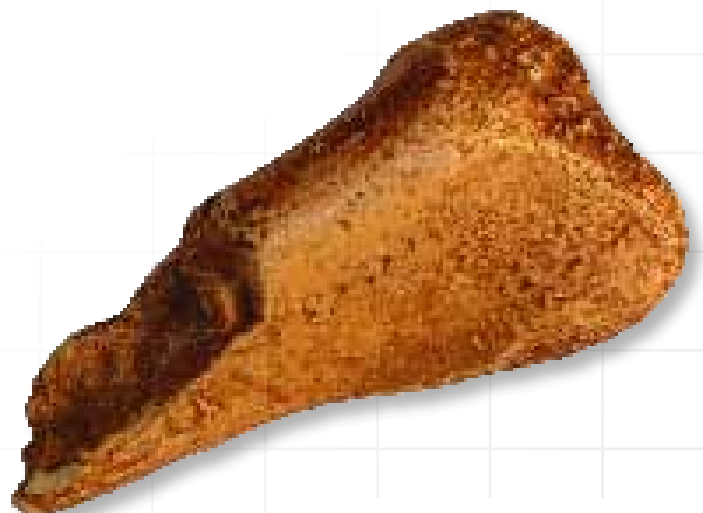
Available online [www.museum.wa.gov.au/education](http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/education)

#### Publications

Fun stuff for students:

- 3D T-rex mask

Available for purchase, please enquire at time of booking.



### Classroom Activities

From this list, please select some activities that are suitable for the age and ability of your students.

- **Focus on a fossil:** Read *Gogo Fish! The Story of the Western Australian Fossil Emblem* (Long, John; illus: Ruse, Jill).
- **Footprints:** Find out the size of a well-known dinosaur footprint and draw an outline on a large sheet of paper. How many students can fit an outline of their own foot inside it?
- **Size and scale:** Use measuring tapes, rulers and other measuring devices such as paper strips to compare the heights of different dinosaurs to everyday objects and familiar buildings. Remember that not all dinosaurs were massive and many could easily fit through the classroom door!
- **Classification:** Discuss herbivores and carnivores, examining pictures of each to determine common distinguishing features such as teeth, claws and limb size/shape. Create a chart in the classroom to show dinosaurs in these categories and add other animals (including humans) to the chart.
- **Exploring through the arts:** Re-write familiar songs to a dinosaur theme and add some creative hand or body actions, e.g. 'Five Little Ducks' becomes 'Five Little Dinosaurs'.
- **My pet dinosaur.** Make dinosaur eggs out of balloons and papier-maché. Paint white and then cut the top open. Make a sock puppet dinosaur to pop out the top.
- **Preparing for the Museum Excursion:** Before visiting the Museum, create a 'mind map' of the facts that the class know about dinosaurs.
- **Find out more:** Use a variety of books and online resources to conduct research on a variety of eg. dinosaurs – *Muttaborrasaurus*, *Carnotaurus*, *Gorgosaurus* and *Tyrannosaurus rex*.
- **Dinosaurs around the world:** When researching dinosaurs and fossils from around the world, place coloured pins with the dinosaurs names on a world map. Where are most of the fossils found? Which dinosaurs have been found in Australia?
- **Describe-a-saur:** Palaeontologists had to use clues from fossils to guess what dinosaurs looked like. What would it be like to draw something that you did not know a lot about. In pairs, give each student a picture of a dinosaur. One has to describe the dinosaur to the other, who has to draw it without looking at the picture. Encourage students to describe features such as teeth, limbs, protection plates, neck length, etc.

- **Dinosaur bodies – structure and function:** Make dinosaur bones out of modelling clay or white pipe cleaners. Discuss how the shape of these bones has a specific purpose; eg teeth are sharp or flat for grinding, limb bones are long for striding or reaching, ribs are curved to protect organs and the skull is thick to protect the brain.
- **Colour or camouflage?:** Collect a variety of dinosaur colouring-in pages and give one to each class member. Instruct half the class to use camouflaging colours and the other half to use 'mate-attracting' colours. Hide all pictures in a small garden area and then give students 30 seconds to find as many as they can. Discuss findings and the benefits of different skin colours, explaining that scientists have used other clues to guess what colour dinosaurs were. Investigate other reptiles and their skin colour.
- **Design-a-saur:** Draw plans for a 'new' dinosaur, including special features to:
  - capture or collect food
  - eat food
  - hide from danger
  - move from place to place
  - call or attract a mate
  - defend itself in a fight.

Use modelling clay to make the dinosaur in 3D, adding features with toothpicks, pipe cleaners, feathers, small shells and coloured markers.

- **Survival and extinction theories:** Make a list on the board (using words or simple pictures) in two categories:
  - things that helped dinosaurs survive (such as food, water, new eggs, sunshine, plants etc).
  - things that may have contributed to extinction (such as volcanoes, predators, cooler climate, meteorites etc).

Each class member can draw a picture of one of the things on the board. Stick coloured card on the back so all pictures look the same. Use these to play a 'survival of the fittest' game where class members stand in a circle, each member turning a card over, sitting down if they turn an 'extinction' card over.