

Grade 2: Module 2: Unit 1

Overview for Families

Notes to Teacher:

Making connections between home and school is vitally important in supporting students' learning. The following suggestions and materials represent some of the ways you can support these connections during this unit.

Suggestions:

- Copy the attached family letter and send it home with students after teaching Lesson 1 (this letter can be used as is or as a model). Consider having the letter translated for families whose first language is not English.
- Invite any guardians or other community members who are involved in the scientific community as paleontologists, archaeologists, or geologists to come to the classroom and share their expertise with students.
- Encourage students to share any at-home learning with the class. Example: Consider providing time for students to share and add their own artifacts to the Curiosities Museum collection. An artifact could be a photograph, a text, or a drawing about fossils.
- Invite students to add their own illustrations to accompany the words listed on the Fossils Word Wall and/or Tools Paleontologists Use anchor chart.
- Depending on the needs of your students and the expectations of your school community, consider assigning additional homework. Consider more open-ended activities that help students read, think, talk, write, and ask questions about the topic instead of those that simply test students on their content knowledge (see suggested activities in the family letter).
- If using EL Education's K–2 Reading Foundations Skills block, consider sending home a copy of the student decodable reader used each week.

Dear Family,

During Unit 1 of this module, your student will begin studying the topic of fossils (the remains or traces of a living animal or plant from a long time ago). They will learn about fossils through narratives about paleontologists. They will also learn about how narratives are structured. I am writing today to explain what your student will be learning, describe the activities that will support this learning, and suggest how to support this learning at home. I hope that you will plan to join us at the end of our study to celebrate all of your student's learning!

What will your student be learning?

Students will begin to study the topic of fossils with a focus on learning about what paleontologists do. The learning will be focused on these ideas:

- Paleontologists look for and study fossils.
- In narratives, characters overcome challenges (solve a problem, tackle a challenge).

Students will also practice these reading foundation skills:

- Vowel teams: *oi*, *oy*, *ou*, and *ow*
- Contractions (e.g., *won't*, *hadn't*, *can't*)
- Words spelled with *-old*, *-ost*, *-ind*, and *-ild*

How will your student be learning?

Throughout the unit, your student will read, think, listen, talk, write, and ask questions about the topic of fossils. Students will participate in these activities, among others, to build their literacy skills:

- Listening to read-alouds of a variety of texts about fossils
- Viewing and describing photos of fossils
- Retelling the beginning, middle, and ending of a narrative
- Creating a collection of fossil photos called a “Curiosities Museum”
- Viewing videos about fossils and paleontologists
- Reading, writing, and drawing about tools paleontologists use
- Reading about several famous paleontologists and then writing a paragraph about one of them

What can you do to support your student’s learning at home?

Here are a few activities that you can do at home with your student to support his or her learning:

- Ask your student to talk with you about the following question: “What do paleontologists do?”
- Read books about fossils and/or paleontologists from home or at the library.
- Talk with your student about how he or she can show the habits of effective learners at school and at home (perseverance, initiative, collaboration, responsibility).
- Invite your student to research and draw tools that paleontologists use in the field or in the laboratory.
- Encourage your student to read the weekly Decodable Student Reader to you.
- Practice forming and reading contractions (e.g., did + not = *didn’t*).
- Practice reading and spelling words ending in *-old*, *-ost*, *-ind*, and *-ild* (examples: *fold*, *most*, *wind*, *child*).

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss your student’s learning.

Sincerely,