

# FOSSILS IN OUR BACKYARD

## Objectives:

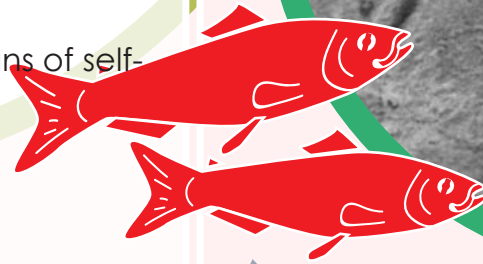
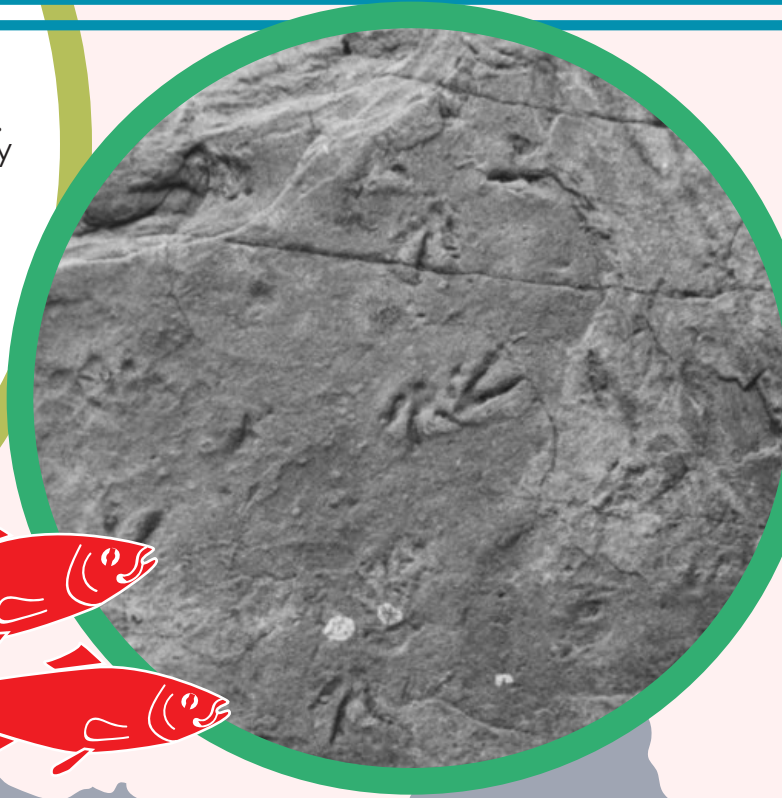
**Children will know:** Children will learn about fossils.  
**Children will do:** Children will learn how to properly search and care for fossils they may find.

## Essential Questions:

- What is a fossil?
- How do we find fossils?

## Standards:

L10. Follows directions.  
PSH6: Engages in play as a means of self-expression and creativity.  
SSC1. Draws and constructs.



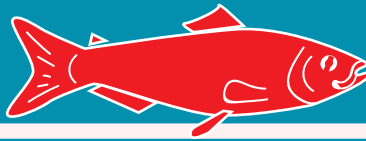
## Materials:

- Sand Table
- Plastic Dinosaur bones
- Paint Brushes
- Magnifying glass (from rock kit)
- Fossil Assortment

## Promoting Culture Self Assessment:

- 1. I display pictures, posters and other materials that reflect the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of children and families served in my early childhood program or setting.
- 6. I encourage and provide opportunities and experiences for children that support Alaska Native culture.

**Alaska Native Values:** Learning by doing, Respect for the environment



## Engage

Set out fossil assortment on a table. Have students gather around the table as you talk. "What do you think these are? These are called fossils. Have you ever seen a fossil before? What is a fossil? When we think of fossils, we may only think of dinosaurs. Fossils are actually the preserved parts of an animal or plant that was once alive. How do you think fossils form? Stone fossils, like the ones we have in front of us, form when mud and sand cover a dead animal or plant. After many years, the skeleton underneath the mud slowly starts to turn to stone. Eventually these stones surface and we can see these fossils for ourselves. Let's take a moment and look at these different fossils." Have students touch and examine the fossils. "Let's try and find some fossils ourselves."

## Explore:

Activity: 10 Minutes

**Preparation:** Bury plastic dinosaur bones in sand on the sand table. Give students brushes and magnifying glasses. "People who have jobs to look for fossils are called paleontologists. Today we are going to be paleontologists and try and find some fossils. Because fossils are so old, we have to dig them up very carefully so they don't break. Let's use our brushes and magnifying glasses to try and find fossils deep in the sand."

## Explain:

"Did you find any fossils? What do you think the dinosaurs were doing? Fossils tell many stories of things that happened in the past. They can show what an animal or plant looked like, where they lived, and how they may have died. We can find fossils in our own backyard if we look close enough. Have any of you found a fossil before or know someone who has? Alaska is filled with fossils. We have learned that the weather used to be much warmer just from studying these fossils." Bring out the fossil assortment again. "What can you learn by looking at each of these fossils? Where do you think are some good places to find fossils where you live?"

## Center Set Up:

### Whole Group:

Display essential questions. Display fossil assortment and magnifying glass. Encourage students to examine fossils

**Art Center:** Set out paper and crayons. Have students make rubbings of the fossil assortment and stone fossil prints.

**Sensory Play:** Put fossil assortment into a box. Have students close their eyes and feel fossils inside the box. Ask students to describe what they are feeling. Ask leading questions such as “Does it feel rough or smooth?”

# EVALUATION

### Emerging:

Student does not participate.

### Developing:

Student participates in discussion but does not engage in activity.

### Proficient:

Student participates in discussion and engages in fossil hunt.

### Advanced:

Student participates in discussion, engages in fossil hunt and shares a story.

