

# My Visit to the Dinosaurs

**Synopsis** A boy goes to the natural history museum with his father and sister and sees the skeletons of all types of dinosaurs. Not only does he describe each dinosaur whose skeleton he sees, he talks about what they ate, how they moved, and other important facts about each of them. He also explains how paleontologists found the bones and put them together.

## Introduction: Explore Informational Narrative

Explain informational narrative. Say, *This is an informational narrative because it provides facts and information about dinosaurs, but it is written as a story told by someone who went to a science museum. The writer shares interesting information about several different dinosaurs that he learned on his trip to the museum.*

## Vocabulary

**Tier Two:** armored, embedded, fiercest, fossil, leathery, nostril, plaster, plated, skeleton, spiked, swat

**Tier Three:** carnivore, herbivore, paleontologist

## Word Work

**L.3.4a** Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

**L.3.5b** Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are friendly or helpful).

Introduce vocabulary in context as it appears within the book before or during reading. Explain to students that the meaning of an unknown word can often be determined by context clues, or how it is used in a sentence. Read the following sentences aloud and have students determine the meanings of the underlined words by their context clues.

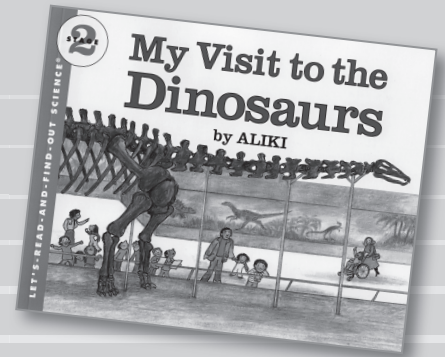
*While digging near the mound, we found fossils of animals that had been buried in the mud, and left their prints when their bodies decayed.*

*The scientists used plaster to fill the molds left by the dinosaur eggs in the nest.*

*The museum put all the bones of the dinosaur together to make a complete skeleton.*

*The horse flicked its tail to swat the fly that buzzed around it.*

Write the text words *spiked*, *armored*, *leathery*, and *plated* on the board. Explain to students that these words are used in the text to describe how the dinosaurs looked or what their bodies were like. Have volunteers tell what they believe each word might mean in relation to the appearance of a dinosaur. Have other volunteers come to the board to draw what they think each description of a dinosaur might look like.



**Author:** Alike

**Genre:** Informational Text

**Text Structure:** Narrative

**Guided Reading Level:** N

**Standards:** L.3.4a, L.3.5b,  
RF.3.3c, RI.3.1, RI.3.3,  
RI.3.7

## English Language Support

Offer realia, gestures, or photos to support the introduction of the new vocabulary. Show photos of dinosaur skeletons. Talk about how different the skeletons look depending on what kind of dinosaur it was. Show photos of fossils, or bring in any that are available. Talk with students about how fossils are formed. Show students photos of animals that are carnivores and herbivores. If possible, compare the teeth of both kinds of animals. Point out that carnivores have sharp teeth for tearing, while herbivores have blunt teeth that are designed for crushing.

## Understanding the Text

**Literal:** *Why did some dinosaurs have bony plates, horns, and spikes on their bodies? (to protect themselves from meat-eating dinosaurs)*

**Interpretive:** *Why did the boy in the book say he was glad the Tyrannosaurus rex was not alive anymore? Use information from the text to support your answers. (These dinosaurs were meat-eating killers who easily killed and ate their prey. He wouldn't want to be a meal for them.)*

**Applied:** *Why are scientists and other people so interested in dinosaurs? What do we all hope to learn from them? Use evidence from the text to support your answers.*

## Phonics and Word Recognition

**RF.3.3c** *Decode multisyllable words.*

Write the text words *paleontologists*, *herbivore*, *carnivore*, *dinosaur*, and *embedded* on the chalkboard. Explain that these words contain more than one syllable and may be decoded by dividing each one into syllables. Draw students' attention to *paleontologists*. Have students say the word and count the syllables. (pa/le/on/tol/o/gists) Ask, *How many syllables are in this word? How can you understand how to pronounce the word by dividing it into syllables?* Discuss open syllables and long vowel sounds (/pa/) and closed syllables and short vowel sounds. (/on/) Help students determine the individual syllables in the other words and have them draw lines between the syllables in each. Have students read aloud the words, and ask volunteers to determine their meanings.

## Text Features

**RI.3.7** *Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).*

Call students' attention to the illustrations on pages 12–21 and 24–31. Have students read the descriptions of each dinosaur and then ask how the illustration helps them understand how the dinosaur really looked and how its body determined how it lived.

## Reading Informational Text

**RI.3.1** *Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.*

Ask students to choose two dinosaurs and write two *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *how*, or *why* questions about each. The answers should be found in the text. Then have students share their questions with the group and have group members find the answers in the book.

## Writing

**RI.3.3** *Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.*

Have students turn to page 8. Ask volunteers to read the information on pages 8 and 9 aloud. Then have students create a flowchart to illustrate the process of how dinosaur bones became fossils and were found by paleontologists. Provide time for students to share and explain.