

**Project FOCUS
Best Lessons
FIRST GRADE**

Title of Lesson: Making a Fossil

Theme: Earth/Space Science

Unit Number: **Unit Title:**

Performance Standard(s) Covered (enter code):

S1CS3

S1CS4

Enduring Standards (objectives of activity):

Habits of Mind

- Asks questions
- Uses numbers to quantify
- Works in a group
- Uses tools to measure and view
- Looks at how parts of things are needed
- Describes and compares using physical attributes
- Observes using senses
- Draws and describes observations

Content (key terms and topics covered):

Fossils, habitats, scientific techniques

Learning Activity (Description in Steps)

Abstract(limit 100 characters): Students make models and understand how fossils help explain things that once lived in the past.

Details: Explain the fossil-making process and let the students choose a small item to fossilize. Have the students smear their object with petroleum jelly. Lead the class through gently pressing their object into the modeling clay. Instruct the children to remove their object, and pour Plaster of Paris into their mold. Once this has set, they can remove their "fossils."

Materials Needed (Type and Quantity):

Plaster of Paris

Modeling clay (a piece for each child)

Shell or some object to make an imprint (small toy dinosaur, leaf, bone, etc.)

Petroleum jelly (to cover object for protection)

Newspaper (to cover work area)

Cup (to mix plaster in)

Baby wipes (to clean students' hands)

Spoon or knife (to mix plaster)

Notes and Tips (suggested changes, alternative methods, cautions):

Cover the work area with newspaper. This project gets quite messy with first graders. Mix the Plaster of Paris when ready to pour into the mold--doing this too early will allow the plaster to harden. Do not allow the kids to eat the plaster! Watch the first graders at all times, and remind them that clay is for modeling, not for throwing.

Sources/References:

- 1) Harcourt Science Book**
- 2)**
- 3)**