



INVESTIGATING FOSSILS

Investigation 4:

Fossils through Geologic Time



Key Question

Before you begin, first think about this key question.

How can we determine the age of a fossil?

Materials Needed

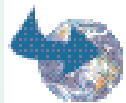
For this investigation your group will need:

- metric measuring tape (as long as possible)
- chalk
- chart paper
- calculator
- “stratigraphic” notebook with “fossils” (this can be made using the detailed instructions provided in the Teacher’s Edition)



Think about what you know about the conditions under which fossils form. If different fossils are found in different layers of rock, could you tell which fossils are the oldest? The youngest?

Share your thinking with others in your class. Keep a record of the discussion in your journal.



Investigate

Part A: Geologic Time

1. Geologists know that Earth is about 4.5 billion (4,500,000,000) years old. Primitive life evolved as much as 3.5 billion years ago, or more, but large and complicated life did not develop until much later. In terms of Earth’s history, humans are very recent. Find them on the chart.