



# Making a Fossil

## Links with Dinosaur Dreaming Site:

At the Dinosaur Dreaming site fossils have been discovered that have originally been parts of skeletons. These parts include teeth, jaw bones, claws, limbs, ribs, fish scales and turtle shell fragments. These fossils are found in sedimentary rocks on the shore platform.

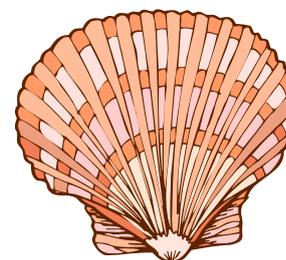
Sometimes when a shell or skeleton is fossilised, the original part of the animal dissolves and only a hole remains. This hole left by the fossil is called a **mould**. Sometimes a **cast** of the fossil is made when the hole is later filled in by other minerals, which then takes on the shape of the original fossil but is a much harder material. We can copy this method to create our own 'fossils'.

## Links with Curriculum:

This activity encourages students to think about how fossils are formed, measure out materials as part of the procedure and decorate the final product. The activity links with the Thinking, Science and Arts domains of VELS.

## Equipment needed

1. plasticine to form a mould
2. shell or bone fragment
3. small plastic plate
4. 3 tablespoons of plaster in a plastic cup
5. stirring tool eg teaspoon or icy pole stick



## Procedure:

- Flatten a lump of plasticine onto the paper plate until it is about 2 cm thick
- Press your shell or bone fragment into the plasticine so you can leave an imprint or **mould**
- Add two tablespoons of water to the dry plaster in the plastic cup and mix well.
- Spoon the plaster mixture onto your plasticine imprint until it is just full
- Gently pat the mixture with your spoon or stick to remove any bubbles in the mixture
- Leave until the plaster is hard.
- Carefully peel the plasticine from the plaster to reveal your **cast** or fossil
- Decorate your fossil with paint and sand to make it look rock-like

## An Extension Exercise:

Some of the fossils found at the Dinosaur Dreaming site have resulted from footprints being made by animals. These footprints have been filled with sediment and over time these sediments have turned into rock.

You can make a fossil using this method by making an impression of a footprint into the plasticine. This could be a paw print from a pet or an imaginary footprint.

Once the print is made you can then fill the impression with plaster and follow the instructions above to reveal your trace fossil.

You could repeat this activity at the beach where there are good examples of animal prints in the sand.

