

# Discovering Dinosaurs

## DINOSAUR "BIOGRAPHIES"

### Grades

2-4

### Objective

Students will practice research, organizational, and informational writing and editing skills to complete a factual report or "biography" about their favorite dinosaur. Compile their final illustrated and edited pieces into a class "Dinosaur Biographies" book.

### Materials

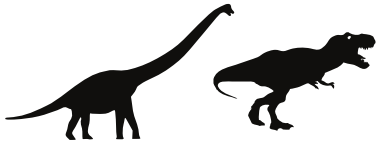
- Dinosaur book list
- Dinosaur research organizer
- Portrait of My Dinosaur
- Add-On: Dinosaur Name Activity

## **Recommended Books**

Sources: School Library Journal, National Science Teaching Association & We Are Teachers

- **Amazing Evolution: The Journey of Life**, by Anna Claybourne (grades 4-7)
- **Dinosaur Atlas: An Amazing Journey Through a Lost World**, by John Malam (grades 5-12)
- **Dinosaur Eggs Discovered: Unscrambling the Clues** by Lowell Dingus (grades 6+)
- **Dinosaur Parents, Dinosaur Young: Uncovering the Mystery of Dinosaur Families**, by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld (grades 4-7)
- **Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Creatures Atlas: The Prehistoric World as You've Never Seen It Before**, by DK (grades 4-7)
- **Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Life**, Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan (grades 2-7)
- **Encyclopedia Prehistorica: Dinosaurs**, by Robert Sabuda (grades K-4)
- **Encyclopedia Prehistorica: Sharks and Other Sea Monsters**, by Robert Sabuda (grades K-4)
- **Giant Sea Reptiles of the Dinosaur Age**, by Caroline Arnold (grades 3-6)
- **Jurassic World Dinosaur Field Guide**, by Thomas R. Holtz Jr. & Michael Brett-Surman (grades 3-7)

- Let's Dig! Exploring Fossils, by Jessica Fries-Gaither & Terry Shiverdecker (grades 3-5)
- Paleontology, by Susan H. Gray (grades 3-5)
- Pterosaurs: Rulers of the Skies, by Caroline Arnold (grades 4-6)
- The Age of Dinosaurs: The Rise and Fall of the World's Most Remarkable Animals by Steve Brusatte (grades 3-7)
- The Secrets of Ancient Sea Monsters, by Yang Yang (grades 4-6)
- Science Comics: Dinosaurs: Fossils and Feathers by MK Reed (grades 4-6)
- Weird But True! Dinosaurs: 300 Dino-Mite Facts to Sink Your Teeth Into (grades 3-7)
- When Fish Got Feet, When Bugs Were Big, and When Dinos Dawned, by Hannah Bonner (grades 3-7)
- When Fish Got Feet, Sharks Got Teeth, and Bugs Began to Swarm, By Hannah Bonner (grades 5-9)



# Dinosaur Research



Name

**Dinosaur Name & Meaning**

**When did it live?**

**Did it live on land, in water, both?**

**What did it eat?**

**How big was it?**

**3 Interesting facts**

**Portrait of My Dinosaur**

# Dinosaur Names

## Activity for Grades K–4

### Introduction

Dinosaur names are often made up of combinations of Greek and Latin root words that describe characteristics or how the animal might have behaved. Other dinosaur names describe where the fossil remains were discovered or the name of the paleontologist who made the discovery. In 1841, Richard Owen, the first director of London's Natural History Museum, gave the name dinosaurs to these giant prehistoric reptiles. The word *dinosaur* is from the Greek *deinos* (terrible) and *sauros* (lizard). Some dinosaur names are short; others are tongue twisters.

### Objective

In this activity, students will be introduced to dinosaur names and their meanings.

### Materials

- List of Greek and Latin root words and their meanings written on the chalkboard or on chart paper
- Pictures of various dinosaurs (You can download images at [www.amnh.org/resources/exhibitions/dinosaurs/](http://www.amnh.org/resources/exhibitions/dinosaurs/))

#### DINOSAUR NAMES

Word	Meaning
<i>allo</i>	strange
<i>apato</i>	deceptive
<i>bronto</i>	thunder
<i>cerat</i>	horned
<i>compsa</i>	pretty
<i>deinos, dino</i>	terrible
<i>echino</i>	spiked
<i>elasma</i>	plated
<i>mega</i>	huge
<i>micro</i>	small
<i>nodo</i>	lumpy
<i>ops</i>	face
<i>ornitho</i>	bird
<i>raptor</i>	robber
<i>rex</i>	king
<i>saur, saurus</i>	lizard
<i>stego</i>	roof
<i>tri</i>	three
<i>tyranno</i>	tyrant

### Procedure

1. Display pictures of *Triceratops*, *Stegosaurus*, *Tyrannosaurus rex*, and *Apatosaurus* to students. Call on students to name the dinosaurs and tell what they know about each one.
2. Tell students that dinosaurs were named using the Latin and Greek language. Explain that these languages are used by scientists to name both animals and plants. Dinosaur names can describe what the dinosaur looked like, how it might have acted, or where it was found. Have students look for the meaning of the Greek and Latin words used in the word "dinosaur" to discover the word's meaning. Write the following on the chalkboard:

*dinosaur* = *dino* + *saur*

Call on a volunteer to look on the chart to find the words *dino* and *saur*. Write *terrible lizard* on the chalkboard and explain that this was the name first given to dinosaurs.

3. Write the following dinosaur names on the chalkboard. Have students use the chart to decipher the names.

*Tyrannosaurus rex* = tyranno + saurus + rex

*Stegosaurus* = stego + saurus

*Triceratops* = tri + cerat + ops

*Apatosaurus* = apato + saurus

4. Have students suggest other dinosaur names that they would like to learn the meanings of. Write the names on the chalkboard. Use the chart provided as a reference.

