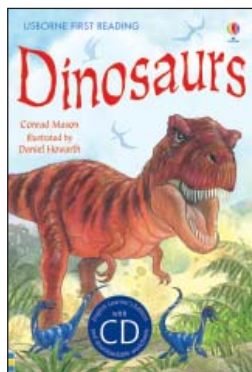


Dinosaurs • Teacher's notes



Author: Conrad Mason

Reader level: Intermediate

Word count: 519

Lexile level: 380L

Text type: Non-fiction (science – natural history)

About the book

This book introduces the incredible world of the dinosaurs, starting with an overview of different types of dinosaurs and what they looked like. We meet both well-known dinosaur types and less familiar ones, and there are vivid and detailed illustrations throughout the book.

We learn about the environment dinosaurs lived in, and some of the creatures they shared it with. The book goes on to compare plant-eaters (herbivores) and meat-eaters (carnivores), and looks at how different dinosaurs hunted and defended themselves, and how baby dinosaurs were born.

There is a description of how the dinosaurs disappeared, and why scientists think this might have happened. Now we learn about dinosaurs from their fossilised bones, but there is still a lot that we don't know. At the end is a dinosaur timeline, showing when different dinosaurs featured in the book lived.

About the author

Conrad Mason grew up in Oxford, where he came face to face with a full-size Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton in the Museum of Natural History. He studied Ancient Greek and Latin at Cambridge, and now lives in London, where he has written everything from quizzes to travel articles, history books and stories. In his spare time he likes reading, and playing the mandolin.

Key words

Dinosaur names can be tricky to pronounce. You can hear how the names are pronounced online at www.usborne.com/englishlearnerseditions

Your students might not be familiar with some other words, which are important in the book.

p2 millions	p18 plesiosaur	p30 indeed	p45 Jurassic
incredible	splashed	club	Cretaceous
creatures	p20 herbivore	p31 thump	p46 glossary
Earth	p22 carnivore	p33 nest	stick up
p4 terrible	p25 huge	laid	
lizard	crunch	p35 went off	
p6 spiny	munch	p37 disappeared	
bony	tiny	p38 space	
p7 crest	p27 sharp	p39 dust	
p9 noise	claws	p42 experts	
p12 modern-day	victims	find out	
p16 pterosaur	p28 escaped	fossils	
looped	p29 horns	turned to	
swooped	attackers	p44 Triassic	
	spikes	period	



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Before reading

Dinosaurs are a passion for many young children, especially boys, so you may find that some of your students already know a good deal about them. You could use either pictures or models to introduce the subject, and draw up a K-W-L chart ("What I Know", "What I Want to know", "What I Learned"), taking suggestions from the class to fill in the first two columns. You could incorporate the following questions, which are answered in the book:

What does the word "dinosaur" mean?

Dinosaurs lived on land. What kind of creatures lived in the sea? [As well as plesiosaurs, students might mention pliosaurs and ichthyosaurs.]

What is the scientific name for animals that eat meat?

How long did dinosaurs live on Earth?

How do experts find out about dinosaurs today?

Reading or listening

You can listen to the story on CD or read it aloud to the students, take turns to read or read together silently. Each double page spread in the book is one track on the CD, so that you can pause between tracks or repeat tracks if your students need it. The first reading is in a British English accent, and it is followed by an American English reading. The words are exactly the same. After the story, there is a short selection of key phrases that can be used for pronunciation practice.

During reading: you might like to ask some of these questions.

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|-----|--|---------|---|
| p7 | Does anyone know why these dinosaurs might have had crests? | p33 | What kinds of animals lay eggs today? [Birds, reptiles, insects.] |
| p13 | Try saying this name quickly without stopping or making a mistake. | pp36-37 | Can you see any animals in the picture that are still living on Earth today? [Iguana, snail, butterfly, crocodile. The small animals on the right are Alphadon and Didelphodon, similar to today's badgers and opossums.] |
| p16 | Are pterosaurs dinosaurs? [Technically, no, they count as a different class of prehistoric animal, as do plesiosaurs and ichthyosaurs.] | p40 | Why do you think we don't know what their skin looked like? |
| p23 | Are all these dinosaurs carnivores? Which one do you think is not? [Saurolophus.] | p43 | Have you ever seen a fossil? What was it? What did it look like? |
| p31 | What are the main ways dinosaurs could make sure they weren't eaten? [Running away fast, or having defences such as horns, spikes, plates or a club tail.] | p46 | Are there any other words you think it would be good to have in the glossary? |

After reading

You could use the book as a starting point for topic work. Students could research and create their own fact cards or minibooks about dinosaurs. If you have a local museum with any dinosaur exhibits, encourage students to visit, or you could even organise a class trip.

Why are people still so fascinated by dinosaurs? Together, think of all the dinosaurs you know from picture books or story books, on TV or in movies. See how many students have or had dinosaur toys or models at home – perhaps they could bring them in to show and tell.

