

Fossil Hunters

by Anna Mackenzie

Summary

For hundreds of years, men and women have hunted for fossils in an effort to find out more about prehistoric life on Earth. This text explains how fossils form and tells us about five fossil hunters in different parts of the world.

Features of the Text

- Factual report
- Explanation of the steps in a process
- Biographical information
- Glossary and index
- Photographs, maps, and illustrations with captions
- Fact boxes

Purpose

Fossil Hunters can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** summarizing and note taking;
- S** drawing conclusions.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Summarizing and note taking
- S** Drawing conclusions

Introducing the text

Discuss what the students already know about fossils and the people who study them. Introduce the word paleontologist.

- *Why do people hunt for fossils?*
- *What questions would you like to ask a paleontologist?*

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read pages 2 to 4 silently.

- *Why do you think the author chose to start with a general overview of fossils?*

Have the students read to the end of page 7.

- *Why did Mary Anning start selling the fossils?*
- *How do you think the scientific community would have reacted if her father had found the ichthyosaurus? Why do you think this? Which part of the text tells you this?*

Ask the students to identify the most important information in chapter 2, modeling taking notes by writing them on the board.

Ask the students to make notes as they read chapter 3 by identifying and jotting down the most important information. Remind them that illustrations and captions hold a lot of information.

- *What are the five most important pieces of information in this chapter? Why do you think they are important?*
- *Are Roy Andrews's discoveries more important than Mary Anning's? Why/why not?*

The students can now read to the end of the text, taking notes as they read. When they have finished, have them work in groups of four to share their notes and explain why they chose their ideas and facts.

- *What conclusions can you draw about the importance of fossils?*
- *What conclusions can you draw about the kinds of people who become paleontologists?*

Following Up

The students can:

- use the blackline master on page 45 to complete a concept web about the text
- conduct their own research on fossil hunting, using the library and the Internet
- invite a fossil hunter to talk to the class or visit the local museum to examine fossils found in their area.