Lesson: Research a Fossil!

Grade level: 3-8  
Preparation time: None  
Activity duration: Anywhere between 2 hours and a week

Learning objectives:
- Students will conduct independent research on a fossil of their choice.  
- Students will identify the placement of their fossil on a historical timeline.  
- Students will use evidence to construct an artistic depiction of the organism.  
- Students will create a short written report about their fossil, with sources listed.

Lesson materials:
- Internet access  
- Posterboard or large pieces of paper for display  
- *World Encyclopedia of Fossils and Fossil Collecting*  
- Colored pencils  
- Drawing paper (regular computer paper works, too)

Lesson procedure:
- Review the fossil vocabulary sheet with students.  
- On an individual basis, allow students to choose a favorite fossil from the book. For their fossil research poster, they should create the following elements:  
  - A written report that includes information about where the fossil was found, the type of fossil it is, and what we know about it  
  - Ideas about the organism’s habitat, diet, and appearance, all based on the evidence provided by the fossil  
  - A timeline, with an identification of when their organism may have died  
  - A list of sources that they used for their research  
  - An artistic depiction of their organism in its habitat