



Toilet Paper Geologic Time Scale

Adapted from www.nthelp.com/eer/HOAtimetp.html

Grade Level: 2+

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Activity Duration: 30 minutes

Concepts Addressed

- The Earth's history has spanned a *very* long time.
- There is an order to major events that have occurred during Earth's natural history.
- Non-avian dinosaurs lived during the Mesozoic Era.
- The Mesozoic Era consists of three time periods--the Triassic came first, then the Jurassic and finally the Cretaceous.
- The Mesozoic Era began around 240 million years ago and ended around 65 million years ago.

Objectives

The student will:

- Observe a visual representation showing the vastness of geologic time.

Materials Not Included

- One roll of toilet paper with 231 or more sheets
- Colored markers
- Clear tape

Procedure

1. Divide students into small groups or pairs. Give each group a roll of toilet paper.
2. In a long, flat hallway, have each group carefully unroll the roll of toilet paper.
3. As you unroll, have your students count the perforations between the sheets.
4. Using colored markers, mark any events you deem important on the attached list of major divisions in earth history.
5. At the least, use the markers to indicate the following events:

Sheets	Event	Geologic Time (number of years before present)	Comments
0	Present	0	
0.0005	Modern man	10,000	
0.07	Homo erectus	1,300,000	
3.25	Non-avian dinosaurs became extinct/Mesozoic Era ends	65,000,000	"recent life"
7	Cretaceous Period begins	140,000,000	
10.4	Jurassic Period begins	208,000,000	
12.25	Beginning of Mesozoic Era/Triassic Period begins	245,000,000	"middle life"
170	Earliest Life	3,400,000,000	
190	Oldest known Earth rocks	3,800,000,000	
230	Origin of earth	4,600,000,000	