The Age of the Reptiles

The Time of the Dinosaurs

Here is a way to understand how dinosaurs fit into time. Imagine that one calendar year is equal to all of the time that has passed on Earth.

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<tr>
<th>Jan.</th>
<th>Feb.</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
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<td>24</td>
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At midnight, Earth begins
(4.5 billion years ago).

Earth gets solid crust
(3.8 billion years ago).

First living things
appear (3.5 billion years ago).

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More complex plants
appear (1.3 billion years ago).

First dinosaurs appear
(abut 215 million years ago).

By the 24th, they are extinct
(about 65 million years ago).

More complex animals
appear (600 million years ago).

Modern man appears at
about 11:48 (12 minutes
before midnight).

Dinosaurs ruled the Earth
for 140 million years.

Man arrived only 100,000
years ago.

The Triassic (try-ASS-ick)

The Triassic Period lasted about 35 million years, from about 240 million to 205 million years ago.

In the beginning of this period, most reptiles were related to the ancestors of mammals. There were no dinosaurs yet.

There were insects, which had already been on Earth a long time, about 170 million years.

Since early life began in the sea, there were many fish and shellfish.

There were amphibians (am-FIB-ee-ans) that lived on land, but laid their eggs in the water.

Amphibians had already existed for about 140 million years. Their eggs had no shells and would dry up if they were not kept moist.

Reptile eggs had shells, which meant the reptiles could lay them on land. This meant that they could roam away from water in their search for food.

The first turtles, crocodiles and flying reptiles appeared.

The first dinosaurs appeared later on in this period.

The Earth's continents were joined into only one land mass called Pangaea, meaning "all land."

Mesozoic Era

The Mesozoic (mez-oh-ZO-ic) Era lasted for 175 million years. It was from 240 million to 65 million years ago.

Dinosaurs ruled the Earth during this time. This era is also called the Age of the Reptiles.

The Earth's climate was different from the way it is today. In the far north and far south, summers were warmer and winters were milder.

Different dinosaurs lived during different periods.

This era can be divided into three periods: the Triassic, the Jurassic and the Cretaceous.

The Mini Page thanks Mr. Raymond Rye, Dr. Hans-Dieter Sues, Dr. Nicholas Hutton II, Dr. Scott Wing and Dr. Michael Brett-Surman of the Department of Paleobiology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, for help with this story.
**T as in Tyrannosaurus**

*Tyrannosaurus...*

- was the biggest flesh-eating animal ever to live on land. It probably spent most of its time looking for food.
- had a strong neck, a huge head about 5 feet long and huge jaws about 4 feet long.
- had up to 60 thick, dagger-like teeth between 3 and 7 inches long.
- walked on its two long and strong hind legs with two big feet.
- had arms only about 30 inches long, too short to reach its mouth.
- used its tail to help it balance.
- could probably move fast, but probably was not very nimble.
- probably ate its food a chunk at a time, and swallowed it whole.

**Rookie Cookie’s Recipe**

**Microwave Butterscotch Crunchies**

You’ll need:
- 1 12-ounce package butterscotch chips
- ¾ cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 3-ounce can chow mein noodles

What to do:
1. Place chips in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on HIGH for 2 minutes or until chips are melted.
2. Stir in remaining ingredients. Mix well.
3. Place by teaspoonfuls on waxed paper. Let cool to harden. Makes about 36.

**Mini Spy . . . !**

Mini Spy is visiting a dinosaur park. It’s almost like living in dinosaur time! See if you can find the following:
- carrot
- frog
- zebra head
- ham
- elephant’s head
- fish
- lion’s head
- shaggy dog
- pig’s head
- word MINI
- eagle’s head
- arrow

**B. Literate’s You Need to Read!**

Literate people know how to read. Can you read these warning words?

**Dinosaur Age**

Words about the age of dinosaurs are hidden in the block below. See if you can find: FOREST, MESOZOIC, TRIASSIC, CRETACEOUS, DINOSAUR, INSECTS, WARM, BIRDS, FISH, EXTINCT, PLANTS, WATER, ROCKS, EARTH, MOSS, FERNS, LAKES, SUN, LAND, SAND, TREES.

**Bassett Brown The News Hound’s Dinosaur Age Try ‘n Find**

![Dinosaur Age Puzzle](image-url)
Your Newspaper, a 32-page illustrated booklet from The Mini Page, makes learning about the newspaper a lot of fun. The booklet discusses newspaper history and vocabulary, and takes a behind-the-scenes look at a typical newspaper story. Fun-to-do activities and puzzles accompany all text. To order, send $1.50 plus 75 cents postage and handling per copy. Send only checks or money orders payable to Andrews and McMeel. Mail order to Your Newspaper booklet, P.O. Box 419150, Kansas City, Mo. 64141.

Go dot to dot and color.

Meet Tony Danza

Tony Danza has played Tony Micelli on the show “Who’s the Boss?” since 1984.

Tony is married to Tracy Robinson and has a son, Marc, 18, and a daughter, Katherine Anne, 2.

Tony was born and raised in Brooklyn, N.Y. He studied history at the University of Dubuque on a wrestling scholarship.

Before becoming an actor, he was a boxer. Acting became his career after he was discovered by a television producer who saw him fight.

For five years he was one of the stars of the show “Taxi.”

Learn while having fun with The Mini Page’s all-new series of three B. Literate Start Charts for beginning readers, writers and counters. Bright, colorful and big (22½ by 28½ inches), the charts encourage kids to “Buzz through the newspaper” to find letters and numbers. Great for the classroom and fun to have at home!

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The Late Triassic

This diorama (di-oh-RAM-uh) shows a Triassic scene. A diorama is a small scene that uses models. You usually look at it through a window.

Coelophysis
(seal-oh-FYE-siss)

Dinosaurs appeared late in the Triassic Period, about 215 million years ago.

They were small, no longer than 8 feet long.

The first mammals appeared about the same time the first dinosaurs did. They were no bigger than a mouse. Mammals remained small during the entire Mesozoic Era.

Some short trees with simple cones had leaves that looked like palm fronds. These were called cycads (SIGH-kads).

There were also evergreen trees with cones. Cycadeoids (sigh-KAD-ee-oids) were like cycads except instead of cones, they had parts that looked like unopened flowers. However, there were no flowering plants at this time.

The ground in some places might be thickly covered with ferns. In other places the ground might be bare. There was no grass.

Jurassic (jurr-ASS-ick)

The Jurassic Period lasted about 67 million years, from about 205 million to 138 million years ago.

Pangaea was splitting up. The huge pieces of land drifted farther apart.

The biggest dinosaurs of all time lived during this period. Brachiosaurus (BRAK-ee-uh-SAW-rus) was the largest of them all. It was as tall as five stories and it weighed as much as 40 tons.

There were so many forests of cycads and cycadeoids that this period might be called the Age of the Cycads. There were also forests of evergreen trees that were not yet like today's conifers. The first birds appeared in the last part of this period.

Camarasaurus (KAM-mar-oh-SAW-rus) was a large, plant-eating dinosaur that lived in the Jurassic Period.

Cretaceous (kree-TAY-shus)

The Cretaceous Period lasted about 73 million years, from about 138 million to 65 million years ago.

The continents drifted apart.

During this period, there were more different kinds of dinosaurs than at any other time.

The climate was still warm and moist, with very few cold temperatures. Flowering plants appeared, as did butterflies and bees. Magnolias and palms grew. Forests of ferns, cycads, pines and sycamores grew, as well as the ancestors of oak, birch and walnut.

Brachyceratops (brack-ee-SAIR-oh-tops) was a dinosaur that lived in the Cretaceous Period.

What happened?

Scientists still debate what caused the dinosaurs to die out. Here are two of several theories.

Some say that the climate changed gradually and the temperatures dropped. As a result, the plants changed, so the food the dinosaurs needed became scarce.

Others say the Earth was struck by a huge meteorite or asteroid. This destroyed much of the life on Earth. The impact released so much energy that it would have been equal to thousands of atomic bombs. The giant cloud that it made could have blocked light from the sun for months or maybe even for years.
Read all about the Age of Dinosaurs

For use by teachers and parents at home and at school.
For use with issue: The Time of the Dinosaurs

Main Idea: This issue is about the age of the dinosaurs. The following is a list of activities to be used with this issue. They are listed in order of difficulty, with the easier pre-reader assignments listed first. Ask the children to do the following:
1. Find the following pictures: a dinosaur, the world, a butterfly, a dragonfly, a tree, a fish, a bee, a plant.
2. Look through your paper for pictures of animals. What kind are they?
3. Write a want ad for a dinosaur you would like to own.
4. Draw a picture of yourself during the time of the dinosaur.
5. Name the correct period for each of the following descriptions: Pangaea was splitting up; summers were warmer and winters milder than they are today; magnolias and palm trees grew; the Earth's continents were joined into one land mass; the first birds appeared; the first turtles, crocodiles and flying reptiles appeared.
6. What would it have been like to live during the time of the dinosaurs? What makes dinosaurs so interesting? Have you ever seen a dinosaur exhibit at a museum? If you were to study dinosaurs, what would you most like to learn? What are some questions you have about dinosaurs? How do you think it would feel to discover a new type of dinosaur?
7. Circle all the numbers. Which is the largest? Which is the smallest?
8. Looking at the calendar diagram, what happened on March 21? What happened in September? How long has man been around?

Gus Goodsport's Report

Supersport: Eric Flaim

Height: 5-6  Age: 22  Weight: 156  College: University of Calgary

Eric Flaim is one of the top speed-skaters in the world.
At the 1988 Olympics, he won a silver medal in the 1,500 meters race.
At last year's World Cup, he was first in the 1,500 meters.
In 1988 Eric won the World All-Around title. He also finished third in the World Sprints.
As a young boy, Eric played ice hockey. He switched to speed-skating at 11.
He grew up in Pembroke, Mass., and moved to Milwaukee, Wis., in high school.