Examining Animal Tracks Package

In this package, you will find a set of 5 photos and a lesson plan to help prepare your students to engage with the Dinosaur trackways exhibit at the Beaty Biodiversity Museum. The lesson will help familiarize students with the types of questions involved in the exhibit and help to broaden their understanding about why scientists study dinosaur tracks.

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Curricular Connections

Grade 1 and 2 Science
- Make and record observations
- Demonstrate curiosity and a sense of wonder about the world

Grade 3 and 4 Science
- Living things are diverse and can be grouped
- Demonstrate curiosity about the natural world
- Biodiversity in the local environment
- Represent and communicate ideas and findings in a variety of ways, such as diagrams
- Make observations about living and nonliving things in the local environment

Grade 5 and 6 Science
- Make observations in familiar or unfamiliar contexts
- The overall scale, structure and age of the universe

Grade 7 Science
- Evidence of climate change over geological time
- The fossil record provides evidence for changes in biodiversity over geological time
Examining Animal Trackways Lesson Plan

Materials:
- Photos of animal tracks (5) (Find below)
- Loose-leaf paper to record observations
- Smart board/Projector to show images to class at large (Alternatively, the teacher can also hold up the photo or pass it around for all students to see instead of projecting it)

Procedure:
- Divide students into approximately 5 groups of 5
- Hand out 1 photo to each group
- Ask students to record all observations about the tracks and what information they might be able to infer from the photo (Leading questions might be: Was the animal travelling alone or in a group? Was it big or small? Are the tracks in snow, sand or dirt- what does this tell us about the animal's ability to survive in certain climates?; Can we tell what direction it was heading in? Are the tracks in a nice neat line, or are they all scattered around? What might this tell us about what the animal was doing at this time (hunting, fleeing, playing, etc.)? What might the tracks tell us about how the animal moved- did it walk on 2 legs or 4, did it hop or walk?)
- Ask them to guess what animal they think might have made the track!
  - Photo 1: Ants, Photo 2: Dinosaurs, Photo 3: Arctic Hare, Photo 4: Deer, Photo 5: Kangaroo
- Once students have had time to discuss and make observations, go through each photo and ask the group to share their thoughts about the animal tracks they observed to the group at large
Image 2: Animal Tracks. Photo by Wikimedia Commons user, Footwarrior, under a creative commons license.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_track