

Pg. 6 The History of Life On Earth

- Fossils provide evidence of earlier life
 - Fossils are the remains of organisms preserved in the earth
 - Scientists use fossils to compare similarities and differences between organisms once living and those living today.
 - Fossils help identify organisms that once lived in the past and have since become extinct.
 - Examples: dinosaurs, trilobites, mammoths, giant tree ferns



Types of Fossils

- Hard body parts such as bones (most)
- Trilobites: form when minerals replace the remains of organisms or parts of organisms
- Prints made by organisms
- Original remains of entire organisms (rare)



Finding the Age of Fossils

- Relative dating
 - One fossil is compared with another one to determine if one formed before or after the other
 - Scientists determine this by looking at the layer of rock in which the fossils are found
- Absolute dating-
 - Scientists study the radioactive elements found in rocks and fossils
 - Measure the amount of uranium 235 and lead 207
 - The more lead, the older it is
 - Carbon 14



