



## Budding Palaeontologists - Teacher Notes

Objects such as dinosaur figurines can be buried in the sand pit or a tray of sand for budding palaeontologists to find using trowels and brushes. This may be another activity that can be done with the fake fossils that students make.



Real fossilised dinosaur eggs

Replica dinosaur eggs can be made using mixtures of ingredients such as sand, salt, coffee grounds and flour (there are plenty of methods available on the internet). The dry ingredients are mixed then dampened and moulded around objects. They may take several days to dry but they can then be broken open (the most fun part!) to discover the object inside. The 'eggs' will set quite hard so mini-hammers may be needed to open them.





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1. Make a mixture of the dry ingredients. The mixture pictured contains equal parts flour, sand and coffee grounds, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  half as much salt.
2. Add water and mix until the mixture holds together when squeezed (the more water you add, the longer they'll take to dry).
3. Mould some of the wet mixture around your dinosaur or object that's being encased.
4. Place in a tray in a warm place to dry, turning the 'eggs' over every day.
5. Wait a few days and crack open with a hammer to reveal what's inside!





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Another way to discover 'fossils' and add a bit of chemistry to your lesson is to hide plastic dinosaurs, crystals or rocks, in balls of bicarbonate soda. Add water to bicarbonate soda to make a paste then mould this around the objects being 'buried'.





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The balls can be dissolved using vinegar from a dropper or for a more spectacular event, try placing them in clear container filled with vinegar (can get messy!). You may like to make them egg-shaped and food colouring can also be added to the bicarbonate soda for effect.

