FOSSIL EVIDENCE

OBSERVE. COMPARE. INFER.

PALEONTOLOGIST _____ DATE _____

MISSION QUESTION

How can shape, texture and pressure leave useful evidence?

1. STUDY THE OBJECT BEFORE YOU MAKE AN IMPRESSION

DRAW AND LABEL ITS SHAPE AND TEXTURE

MY OBJECT

I chose:

_____

_____

Details I expect to see:

_____

_____

_____

2. COMPARE TWO MODEL IMPRESSIONS

Use the same object and equal clay pieces. Change only how firmly you press.

CLUE	GENTLE	FIRM	WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS
Outline	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	
Small details	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	
Depth	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	
Easy to recognize	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	CLEAR ○ FAINT ○	

MY EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIM

The _____ impression preserved more useful evidence because

_____

READ THE ROCK RECORD

SEQUENCE. CLASSIFY. EXPLAIN.

PALEONTOLOGIST _____ DATE _____

3. DRAW A POSSIBLE FOSSIL JOURNEY

A fossil can form in several ways. Show one possible sequence using pictures and short labels.

1 LIFE OR A LIVING TRACE

Draw a shell, bone, leaf, footprint or burrow.

2 RAPID BURIAL

Add mud, sand or other sediment before evidence is destroyed.

3 LAYERS AND CHANGE

Add more layers. Show sediment hardening or minerals entering spaces.

4 EXPOSURE AND DISCOVERY

Show erosion or digging revealing evidence in rock.

4. BODY FOSSIL OR TRACE FOSSIL?

Circle BODY for remains or TRACE for evidence of activity.

Tooth	BODY ○	TRACE ○
Footprint	BODY ○	TRACE ○
Burrow	BODY ○	TRACE ○

5. WHAT COULD THIS CLUE TELL US?

A trackway might help a scientist infer:

COLOR ○ MOVEMENT ○ SOUND ○

The evidence supports my choice because:

_____

6. WHAT DOES OUR CLAY MODEL SHOW, AND WHAT DOES IT LEAVE OUT?

It helps us investigate: _____

It does not recreate: _____

A model is useful when we are clear about what it can and cannot show.