

## Dino dictionary













## FACT SHEET 1

### Mesozoic era 248 million to 65 million years ago

A few facts:

Mesozoic era – the era of the dinosaurs. The Mesozoic era is a name for the whole dinosaur era, split into three smaller epochs. In your presentation, you need to give an overall impression of the organisms and environment of the Mesozoic era.

At the beginning of this era, all of the Earth's continents we joined into one massive continent called Pangaea.

This meant that the dinosaurs could roam around the Earth and settle down in nearly every part of it.

Over time, Pangaea split into two continents, the northern continent of Laurasia and the southern Gondwana, with dinosaurs roaming around each. By the end of the Mesozoic, the continents had split into more like the forms that we know today (Laurasia split into North America and Eurasia, and Gondwana split into South America, Africa, Australia and Antarctica).

The dinosaurs shared the oceans with new species of fish and swimming reptiles.

On land, dinosaurs competed with other reptiles, including turtles, crocodiles and the ancestors of lizards and snakes. Flying reptiles appeared during this era and eventually evolved into birds as scales were replaced with feathers. Insects needed to pollinate the new flowering plant species, such as butterflies, flies and wasps, appeared, as did the first mammals.

*How would all those living things have related to each other?*

*What was the vegetation like in the Mesozoic era?*

Find out by going to these websites:

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/dinosaurs/plants/>

<http://fossilnews.com/2000/mezplants/mezplants.html>

<http://www.dinodatabase.com/dinoage.asp> (this one gives information about the climate too)

Also: type 'vegetation Mesozoic era' into Google images to see what the plants looked like.



## FACT SHEET 2

### TRIASSIC 245 to 208 million years ago

A few facts:

During the Triassic period, all land on Earth existed as one enormous mass. It was called Pangaea. The supercontinent slowly began to break up during the Triassic Period. Some reptiles, frogs, turtles and crocodiles existed earlier, but dinosaurs didn't appear until late in the Triassic period.

The dinosaurs were small, lightly built dinosaurs. *Type Triassic dinosaurs into Google images: What did they look like?*

The first mammals evolved during the Triassic period. *Type Triassic mammals into Google images: what did they look like?*

Most of the plants that existed were evergreens. *Type Triassic plants into Google images: what did they look like?*

The Triassic period ended with a mass extinction that wiped out most animals and reptiles. The dinosaurs that survived flourished in the next period, the Jurassic.

Dinosaurs that lived during the Triassic period include:

*Coelophysis* - a 9-foot long carnivore that was quick on its feet

*Desmatosuchus* - a reptile that looked like a crocodile and had sharp spikes on its back

*Eoraptor* - the earliest-known dinosaur; walked on two feet

*Ichthyosaurs* - marine reptile

*Iguanodon* - the first dinosaur to be discovered; its bones and teeth are different from any other known reptile

*Plateosaurus* - five-fingered hands with a clawed thumb

*Proganochelys* - the earliest-known turtle

*Look these up: what did they look like?*

*What would they have eaten?*

Find out by going to these websites:

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/dinosaurs/plants/>

<http://fossilnews.com/2000/mezplants/mezplants.html>

[www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history\\_of\\_the\\_earth/Triassic](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history_of_the_earth/Triassic) website on the Triassic period

<http://www.dinodatabase.com/dinoage.asp> (this one gives information about the climate too)

Also: type 'vegetation Triassic' into Google images to see what the plants looked like.



## FACT SHEET 3

### **JURASSIC 208 to 146 million years ago**

A few facts:

As the supercontinents continued to break apart, dinosaurs continued to rule the land and flourished during this epoch.

Birdlike dinosaurs first appeared and flowering plants began to appear late in this epoch.

The Jurassic period also ended with an extinction, but it was not as extensive as the one in the Triassic period. Only a few types of dinosaurs died out. Dinosaurs that lived during the Jurassic period include:

*Allosaurus* - the biggest meat-eater of the period, measuring about 40 feet long

*Apatosaurus* - measured between 70 and 90 feet, but its head was only about 2 feet long

*Archaeopteryx* - one of the earliest-known birds, this creature shared many characteristics with dinosaurs

*Compsognathus* - the smallest-known dinosaur was about the same size as a chicken

*Diplodocus* - At 90 feet long, this was one of the longest land animals

*Mamenchisaurus* - this dinosaur's neck measured an amazing 46 feet long

*Stegosaurus* - a three-ton giant with the brain the size of a walnut

*How do you think all these dinosaurs would have related to each other?*

*What would they have eaten?*

Find out by going to these websites:

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/dinosaurs/plants/>

<http://fossilnews.com/2000/mezplants/mezplants.html>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history\\_of\\_the\\_earth/Jurassic](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history_of_the_earth/Jurassic) website on the Jurassic period

<http://www.dinodatabase.com/dinoage.asp> (this one gives information about the climate too)

Also: type 'vegetation Jurassic' into Google images to see what the plants looked like.



## FACT SHEET 4

### CRETACEOUS 146 to 65 million years ago

A few facts:

Pangaea continued in its splitting and a wide variety of dinosaurs roamed the land. Birds flourished and spread all over the globe

Flowering plants developed and mammals flourished.

Dinosaurs became extinct by the end of the period. The extinction, the second largest of all time, marked the end of the Age of Reptiles and the beginning of the Age of Mammals.

Dinosaurs that lived during the Cretaceous period include:

*Ankylosaurus* - the most heavily armed dinosaur, with bony plates, studs and spikes lining its entire back

*Giganotosaurus carolinii* - measuring about 45 feet long and weighing about 8 tons, it holds the record as the largest carnivore

*Hadrosaurus* - this herbivore had a toothless bill but many cheek teeth

*Megaraptor* - a fast runner with a sickle-shaped claw on each foot

*Orinthomimus* - at an estimated 40 to 50 miles per hour, this was the fastest dinosaur

*Seismosaurus* - considered the largest dinosaur, it measured 120 feet long and stood about 18 feet high

*Triceratops* - this quadruped (four-footed) dinosaur walked on its four stumpy legs and used the three horns on its head for protection.

*Troodon* - largest brain-to-body ratio of all known dinosaurs; believed to be as intelligent as modern birds

*Tyrannosaurus rex* - T. rex, king of the dinosaurs, dominated the period.

*Look these up: what did they look like?*

*What would they have eaten?*

Find out by going to these websites:

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/dinosaurs/plants/>

<http://fossilnews.com/2000/mezplants/mezplants.html>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history\\_of\\_the\\_earth/Cretaceous](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history_of_the_earth/Cretaceous) website on the Cretaceous period

<http://www.dinodatabase.com/dinoage.asp> (this one gives information about the climate too)

Also: type 'vegetation Cretaceous' into Google images to see what the plants looked like.

