



Create a Paleontological Diorama



IN *GUTSY GIRLS GO FOR SCIENCE: PALEONTOLOGY*, YOU HAVE READ ABOUT MANY INTERESTING PLACES WHERE PALEONTOLOGISTS HAVE DISCOVERED FOSSILS. PERHAPS YOU KNOW OF SOME OTHER FOSSIL LOCATIONS. YOU'VE ALSO LEARNED THAT FOSSILS GO FAR BEYOND DINOSAURS. THERE ARE FOSSILS OF SINGLE-CELL ORGANISMS, PLANTS, AND MAMMALS, TOO.

Build a model or diorama (a three-dimensional model) of a location and time period of your choice.

1 Research the environment and time period you want to create. For example, during the Triassic Period (252–201 million years ago), land was joined together in one continent called Pangaea. Most of Pangaea was covered by desert, with dinosaurs living in the ocean. By the Jurassic Period (201–145 million years ago), Pangaea began breaking up. Land-based plants and animals expanded greatly. Will your diorama show desert, ocean, ancient forests, or perhaps swamps?

2 Start by adding ground covering. This could be sand or gravel or colored paper that represents the ground.

YOUR FIELD KIT CHECKLIST

(Note: Materials will depend on the environment you wish to create. Use your imagination!)



- ✓ **LARGE BOX (AN OLD AQUARIUM WORKS WELL, TOO!)**
- ✓ **GROUND COVERING (SAND, GRAVEL, BLUE PAPER FOR WATER, GRASS, SMALL PLANTS)**
- ✓ **ROCKS**
- ✓ **SMALL PLASTIC TOYS OF ANIMALS, PLANTS, SKELETONS**
- ✓ **GLUE**
- ✓ **MARKERS/PAINTS**
- ✓ **MAGAZINES (FOR PICTURES YOU CAN USE)**
- ✓ **SCISSORS**

3 What other objects would be found in the environment? Rocks? Trees? Hint: Don't start gluing right away. Add items first to see how they look. You may want to move things around.

4 Once your environment is ready, glue the items in place and add your representation of the living organisms that once lived there.

Try this!
Make a model of a paleontologist working in your environment. What kinds of gear would she need to be equipped with? What clothing would she be wearing in that climate? Don't forget sun block!