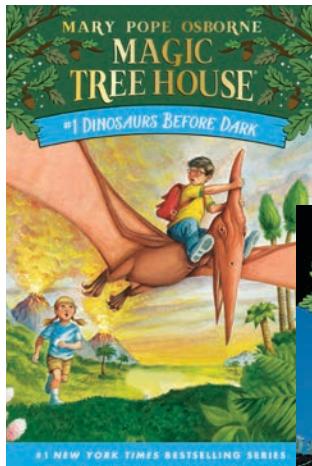


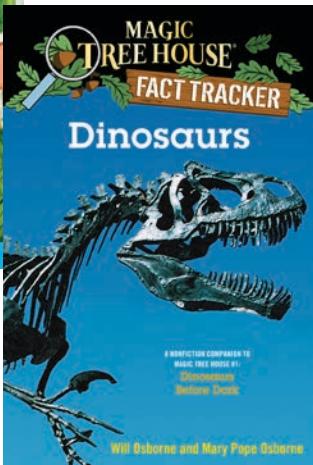
# EDUCATORS' GUIDE

# MAGIC TREE HOUSE®

**Dinosaurs Before Dark** and  
**Dinosaurs: A Nonfiction Companion to Dinosaurs Before Dark**



PB: 978-0-679-82411-4  
EL: 978-0-375-89418-3  
Grades: 1–4  
F&P: M • Lexile: 240L



PB: 978-0-375-80296-6  
EL: 978-0-307-97508-9  
Grades: 2–5  
F&P: Q • Lexile: 690L

## ABOUT *Dinosaurs Before Dark*

“With an entertaining blend of fact, farce, and fantasy, Osborne tells the story of Jack and his sister, Annie, who take a trip in a magic tree house and land in a time 65 million years ago. They find dinosaurs and volcanoes and adventure. Veteran storyteller Osborne builds the power of reading into the story: it’s the books in the tree house that give the kids the magic to travel and see far, far away.”—*Booklist*

## ABOUT *Dinosaurs*:

*A Nonfiction Companion to Dinosaurs Before Dark*

Who invented the word dinosaur? What was the name of the biggest dinosaur? In *Dinosaurs: A Nonfiction Companion to Dinosaurs Before Dark*, Jack and Annie explain everything you ever wanted to know about the real-life world of dinosaurs.

# CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

## ACTIVITIES FOR *Dinosaurs Before Dark*

### The Land Before Time

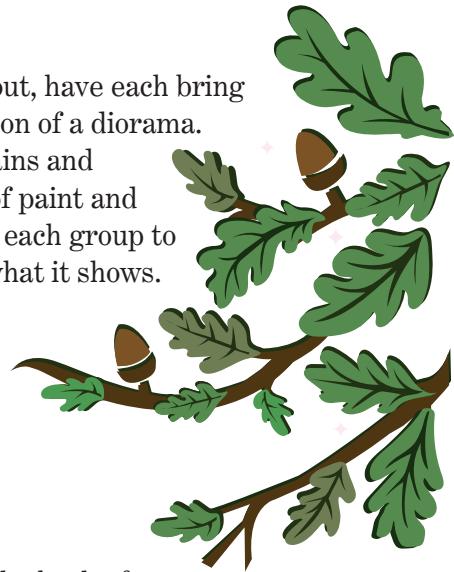
When Jack and Annie are whisked off to the time of the dinosaurs, they find themselves in the Cretaceous Period, the last part of the Mesozoic Era, whose ending is marked by the great extinction of the dinosaur population 65 million years ago. Details provided in the story help to paint a picture of this post-Jurassic period, which, for 80 million years, provided a nourishing environment for its many reptilian inhabitants.

Identify with students the different dinosaurs that lived during this period, labeling them as “carnivores” or “herbivores.” Highlight how distinguishing physical characteristics enabled them to draw on aspects of their environment to survive as plant or meat eaters.

Divide the class into groups. Using a cardboard box with its front cut out, have each bring the Cretaceous Period to three-dimensional life through the construction of a diorama. Students can create the natural landscape of hills and valleys, open plains and volcanoes, tall grasses, ferns, and magnolia trees from a combination of paint and natural materials. Dinosaur figures can be made from clay. Encourage each group to share its 3-D scene with classmates, describing how it was made and what it shows.

**CURRICULUM:** Science • Arts

## ACTIVITIES FOR *Dinosaurs: A Nonfiction Companion to Dinosaurs Before Dark*



### Be a Fact Finder!

Jack and Annie collect many facts during their research. To make the information easy to find, they created an index—an alphabetical list in the back of the book. Using the index, have students find 10 dinosaurs and list a fascinating fact about each one, including the page number where the fact was found. Students can create a chart to record the information.

**CURRICULUM:** Science

### Who's My Kin?

Students learn that dinosaurs are classified as reptiles. Have students generate a list of the characteristics of reptiles and of dinosaurs. Then have them compare and contrast present day reptiles, such as snakes, turtles, and lizards, to the dinosaurs and illustrate.

**CURRICULUM:** Science • Arts

### Who's Who?

Discuss the many different types of dinosaurs and the characteristics of each. Have each student write the name of a type of dinosaur on a piece of paper and tape it to another student's back. Students travel around the room asking each other only "yes" or "no" questions trying to guess the type of dinosaur taped to their back.

**CURRICULUM:** Language Arts

### Can You Dig It?

Paleontologists are scientists who study dinosaur fossils. Discuss how these scientists locate fossils, and describe the tools necessary for excavation. Place items in a tray and cover them with sand. Use string to construct a grid to divide the areas to be studied. Students can record their findings in a notebook similar to Jack and Annie's.

**CURRICULUM:** Math • Science

### What's in a Name?

Jack and Annie learn that dinosaurs are named in various ways. Have students create their own "Sillyaurus" (p. 33) dinosaurs by using different parts of dinosaur names. Ask students to name their dinosaurs and write about what they eat and how to care for them. Then have students draw their new dinosaur creations to exhibit in a classroom Dinosaur Hall of Fame.

**CURRICULUM:** Language Arts • Art

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