

EXCAVATION STATION Dig That!

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a container, measure out cornstarch and water. Stir to mix.
2. The consistency should be like oobleck: solid when a force is acting upon it and liquid when being poured. Start with 1/4 cup of water and add more as needed. If it is soupy, add more cornstarch. If it becomes too thick, add more water.
3. Put the toys into the oobleck as far down as possible until they are buried.
4. Put the container outside to dry in the sun. This should take about 1-2 days. If rainy, bring the container back in until the rain stops then place it back outside until fully dry. The oobleck is ready when it is very hard and cracks began to appear on the surface.
5. Carefully remove the dried oobleck and place it on a tray or surface that will be easy to clean up.
6. Pick away the oobleck with tools to uncover the buried "fossils".
7. When finished, clean the toys with water and trash the bits of oobleck.

MATERIALS

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 - 1/2 cup water
- An empty container
- Items to bury: dinosaur toys, bones, etc.
- Tools to dig: toothpicks, paintbrush, toy hammers, etc.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Paleontology is the study of past life on Earth through fossils. A fossil is the remains of something that was once alive, such as plants and animals. Over time, most solid fossils like bones become rock-like when parts of bone are replaced by something else. Imagine filling a sponge with glue.

Paleontologists use many types of tools to excavate or dig up these fossils from the sediments. Fossils are very delicate, so the tools paleontologists use have to be things that cannot damage them like paint brushes and toothpicks.



Tag us @perotmuseum on social media to show us how you *Amaze your Brain!*

EXCAVATION STATION Dig That!

Imagine you are a paleontologist and you brought back a large chunk of sediments to your laboratory that you know have fossils hidden inside. Your job will be to excavate or remove these fossils carefully without damaging the specimen.

ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATION

1. How can something living become a fossil?
2. What can a dinosaur leave behind for a paleontologist to study?
3. What part of the dinosaur can you observe to tell you what it likes to eat?
4. Aside from animal fossils, is there anything else that paleontologists may want to study?



Tag us @perotmuseum on social media to show us how you *Amaze your Brain!*