

DIY DINO



DIG SITE

When excavating a dig site, paleontologists use a grid system to mark which artifacts were found and where they were buried. You can set up a similar system at home by using the following items:

- This printed activity page (one for each partner)
- About a dozen clean plastic storage containers or empty shoeboxes
- Uncooked rice (approximately ten to fifteen cups)
- A spoon and a pair of tweezers or salad tongs
- An extra bowl for holding rice as you excavate
- Masking tape and a permanent marker
- Small items that you won't mind getting a little messy (at least one for each container)

SCENARIO #1:

1. Assemble your containers into several rows of equal lengths, lined up top to bottom. (It's okay if your containers don't form a perfect grid.) Starting in the top left corner, label each container with a letter using your masking tape and permanent marker.
2. On the back side of this paper, draw a grid system in the space provided and label each box as you just did in Step 1. You don't need to worry too much about scale for this particular drawing.
3. Have a partner place each item in one of the containers or boxes. (Make sure your back is turned or your eyes are closed so you don't see where each item goes!) Your partner should pour rice over each item until it is completely covered. However, the container does not need to be full.
4. Take your spoon and begin scooping out rice from your first container into your empty bowl. You can start with whichever container you'd like. Make sure you scoop slowly and carefully, so as not to damage the "artifact" underneath.
5. Once you uncover a side or edge of your artifact, take your tweezers/salad tongs and carefully grip it. Lift the artifact out and set it aside, making sure to record on your grid drawing where the item was uncovered. You can either create a small sketch of the item or come up with a simplified symbol to represent the artifact. (If you draw a symbol, be sure to set up a key along the side of your grid drawing.)
6. Continue digging and drawing until you've discovered all the artifacts.

THAT'S HOW YOU DIG UP DINOSAUR BONES! AWESOME JOB!



For the curious

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SCENARIO #2:

1. Now, switch places with your partner. Since your containers are already labeled, all you have to do is bury each artifact in a different location. Pour rice from your bowl back into each box or container until the artifacts are completely covered again. (You may need to slightly redistribute the rice, depending on where you buried the artifacts this time around.)
2. Have your partner begin uncovering each artifact, using the spoon and tweezers/salad tongs. They should mark the artifacts on their printed activity page as they go along.
3. Continue digging and drawing until your partner has discovered all the artifacts.

