

# LESSON 17:

## HANDMADE MEMORIES

### SUPPLIES

#### TEACHER BRINGS

- Flour (6 lb/20 cups)
- Salt (6 lb/10 cups)
- Water (10 cups)

#### PENCIL BOX

- Markers

#### MAIN BIN

- Plates (20)
- Bowls (20)
- Spoons (20)
- Paper Towels

#### FOLDER

- Handprint Fossil Instructions (5 pages divided into fourths)

### OBJECTIVE

- Understand what fossils are and how they help scientists learn about living things from the past.
- Create a handprint fossil using salt dough to explore how imprints can be preserved over time.

### HOOK:

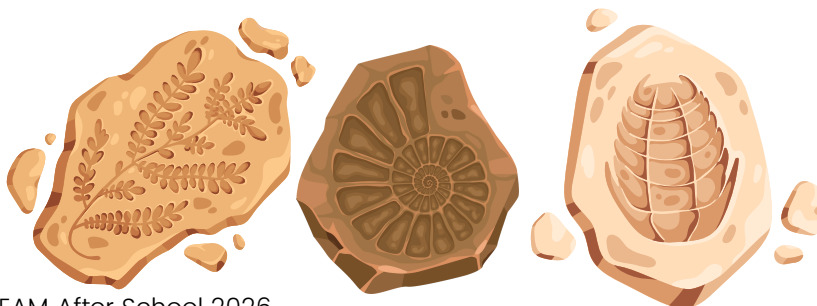
🕒 3-5 min

Have you ever seen a footprint in the mud and wondered who or what left it behind? Maybe it was a person, a bird, a dog or even a dinosaur! When a print is left behind on the earth's surface, this is called an imprint. When these imprints get stuck in the Earth and harden over time, they become something special called fossils. Today, you're going to become little paleontologist and make a fossil of our own handprints so someone in the future can see how small and special your hand was!

### INTRODUCTION:

🕒 5-10 mins

Did you know that fossils are like nature's time capsules? Fossils help scientists understand what lived on Earth a long, long time ago—millions of years before we were born! Fossils are the remains or marks left behind by plants, animals, or even people from long ago. Some fossils are bones, some are teeth, and some are imprints—like footprints, leaves, or shells pressed into soft ground that later became hard like rock. When scientists or paleontologists find these fossils, they are able to obtain clues about what the world used to be like long, long ago. A footprint can show how big an animal was, or how it walked. Even the smallest imprint can tell a big story about the past. Today, you get to become a paleontologist—that's a scientist who studies fossils! Instead of digging in the ground, we'll make our own fossil using salt dough and a very special tool: your hand! By the end of this project, you'll have created your very own fossil—something that shows what your hand looked like at this moment in time. Someday, maybe someone else will find it and wonder about the person from the past who made it - YOU!



## DISCUSSION:



5 min

Ask Students:

- What do you think a fossil can tell us about the past?
- Why do you think scientists get excited when they find fossils?
- What might a fossil of your hand tell someone a hundred years from now?

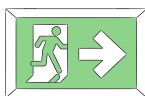


## EXPERIMENT



30-35 min

1. Instruct students to begin by pouring 1 cup of flour into their mixing bowl.
2. Then, instruct students to add ½ cup of salt to the flour. Stir together with a spoon (or hands) until evenly combined.
3. Next, slowly pour in ½ cup of water and continue mixing until a dough begins to form. Assist students as needed, especially with measuring or stirring. The dough should be pliable but not too sticky.
4. Once the dough has mostly come together, instruct students to knead it with their hands. Check consistency: if it's too dry, add a small splash of water; if it's too sticky, sprinkle in a bit more flour. Encourage students to engage with the texture as a sensory experience for young students.
5. Instruct students to roll their dough into a ball. Flatten the ball into a round, pancake-like shape on their paper plate.
6. Guide students to press their hand firmly into the dough to create a clear imprint. Hold for a few seconds, then carefully lift the hand to reveal the handprint fossil shape.
7. Using the markers, write the students name on the paper plate containing their fossil for identification.
8. Set the handprint fossils aside in a dry area. Explain to students that the dough will need time to harden, just like how fossils form over time in nature. Students can take their handprint fossil home to continue drying. Instruct students to air dry for 24-48 hours. Send each student home with a copy of the handprint fossil instructions for parents/guardians.



### Exit Ticket



Ask students the following question as they walk out the door.

- Q: What are fossils?
  - A: Fossils are the remains or marks left behind by plants, animals, or even people from long ago.

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## HANDPRINT FOSSIL INSTRUCTIONS

- In today's iSTEAM class your child became a junior paleontologist and made their very own handprint fossil using salt dough! To finish the process, please follow these simple steps at home:
- Place the fossil on a flat, dry surface (like a paper plate).
- Let it air dry at room temperature for 24–48 hours.
- Turn the fossil over after 24 hours to help both sides dry evenly.
- Avoid placing it in a plastic bag or airtight container—it needs air to dry.
- Once dry, your child can use acrylic paint to decorate it's surface.



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