

Third Grade
MSTEP Homework Packet # 9

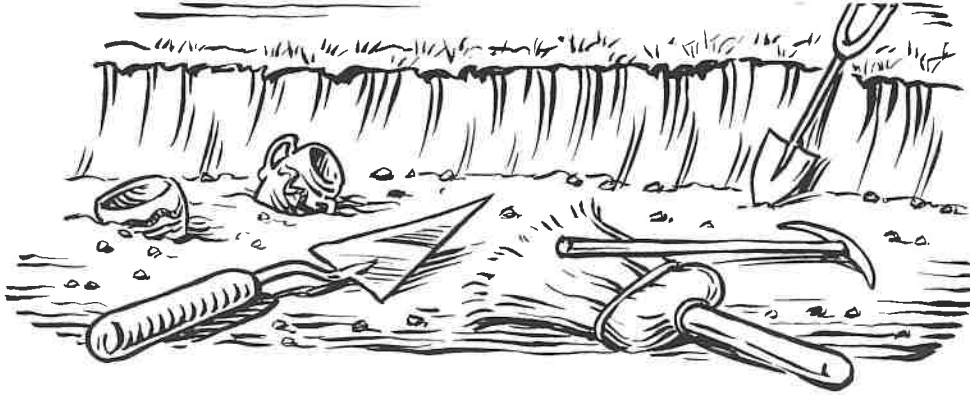
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Student's Name

Name _____ Date _____

Read the journal entries in “My Week as a Fossil Hunter” before answering Numbers 19 through 35.



My Week as a Fossil Hunter

Sunday, June 5

A dream has come true for me. Ever since I was five years old, I've been interested in dinosaurs. Now I have the chance to look for dinosaur bones. Tomorrow morning, I'll be helping a team of students dig for fossils—and not just dinosaurs.

We're at a ranch in northern New Mexico. The climate is dry, the days are warm, and the nights are cool. There are cliffs, hills, and mountains. It is a beautiful part of the country. The dig site where I'll be working is called Hayden Quarry.

In the past few years, scientists and other researchers have found remains of dinosaurs and fish and traces of other animals at the quarry. Thousands of animal bones are buried under the rock here. These bones and other objects tell us much about life long ago.

I hope I'm able to sleep tonight. I'm excited for tomorrow to be here. Who knows what we may dig up?

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Monday, June 6

The first thing we have to do in our area is remove the rock that covers the fossils. This rock is called the overburden. It comes from ancient rivers that flowed through the area.

We worked all day using shovels to remove the rock. Halfway through our work, the sounds of a distant thunderstorm rumbled from far away. Our leader moved us to safety for a few hours. When the thunder stopped, we got back to work.

I asked our group leader how people knew to dig for fossils in this location. He told me that a hiker walking through here in 2002 discovered some fossils. After that, people who collect and study fossils began to come here to look for bones, teeth, and other prehistoric remains.

I must remember to take some pictures. The sunlight on the cliffs is so pretty!

Tuesday, June 7

Now that the rock layer is out of the way, we're using small picks and brushes to remove rock and dirt around the bones we find. We have to be very careful not to damage the bones as we uncover them. Some of the tools we use aren't much bigger than a toothpick!

I'm too tired to write any more tonight, but I loved every minute of today. The hard work and hot sun wore me out. It did help that I wore my hat and plenty of sunscreen. I wish I could stay for a whole month instead of just one week.

Wednesday, June 8

Today, one of the students found the upper leg bone of a dinosaur. Everyone was pretty excited about that discovery. I got to touch the bone with my hands! How many people get to do that?

The fossils we've been finding are very different in size. The fossils can be as tiny as a grain of sand or longer than one foot. To find the smaller fossils, we have to scoop up clumps of dirt and put them in bags that have very tiny holes. Next we put the bags in a nearby stream, under big rocks to hold them in place. The water washes the

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mud away. Then we dry what's left on a sheet in the sun. This makes it easier to find the smaller fossils.

I'm learning so much and having fun doing it. Maybe I'll do this for a living someday.

Thursday, June 9

So far our team has found six bones! I am on top of the world about this! It really is amazing that we have found so many. Usually it takes months to find that many bones at one site.

All of the fossils will be sent to a lab. People at the lab will carefully study the fossils for clues. These clues tell them what animal the fossils belonged to, what it looked like, how it moved, and what it ate.

The bad news is that I am going home in two days. The good news is, when I get back home, I'll have lots of great stories and pictures to share with my family and friends.

Now answer Numbers 19 through 35. Base your answers on the journal entries in "My Week as a Fossil Hunter."

- 19 What does the title of the journal help the reader to know?
- (A) that the writer is a girl
 - (B) that the writer is in New Mexico
 - (C) that these are notes about looking for fossils
 - (D) that these are notes about camping out in June

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- 20 Read this sentence from the journal.

The dig site where I'll be working is called Hayden Quarry.

What does the word *site* mean in the sentence above?

- F an area or place
- G an enclosed room
- H a dry environment
- I a wooden platform

- 21 Read these words from the journal.

In the past few years, scientists and other researchers have found remains of dinosaurs and fish and traces of other animals at the quarry.

Which word from the sentence above helps the reader understand the meaning of *researchers*?

- A scientists
- B remains
- C dinosaurs
- D animals

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- 22 Read the dictionary entry below.

traces \trās'ěz\ *noun* 1. lines. 2. signs. 3. straps. 4. trails.

Read this sentence from the journal.

In the past few years, scientists and other researchers have found remains of dinosaurs and fish and traces of other animals at the quarry.

Which meaning BEST fits the way the word *traces* is used in the sentence above?

- F meaning 1
 - G meaning 2
 - H meaning 3
 - I meaning 4
- 23 Read this sentence from the journal.

Thousands of animal bones are buried under the rock here.

Which word has the same sound as the underlined part of the word *rock*?

- A camp
- B chin
- C knife
- D voice

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- 24 Why are the people at Hayden Quarry digging for fossils?
- F so they can enjoy time outdoors
 - G so they can compare sizes of fossils
 - H so they can learn about life long ago
 - I so they can sell the fossils to make money

- 25 Read this sentence from the journal.

I asked our group leader how people knew to dig for fossils in this location.

What does the word *location* mean as used in the sentence above?

- A ground
 - B place
 - C town
 - D way
- 26 How has the author organized the information in this journal?
- F by types of fossils
 - G by days of the week
 - H in order of importance
 - I from last to first event

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Reading and
Analyzing Text

- 27 Read this sentence from the journal.

After that, people who collect and study fossils began to come here to look for bones, teeth, and other prehistoric remains.

What does the word *prehistoric* mean in the sentence above?

- Ⓐ related to history
- Ⓑ after written history
- Ⓒ before written history
- Ⓓ the early part of history

- 28 Read this sentence from the journal.

Now that the rock layer is out of the way, we're using small picks and brushes to remove rock and dirt around the bones we find.

Which word has the same sound as the underlined part of the word *remove*?

- Ⓕ good
- Ⓖ spoon
- Ⓗ took
- Ⓘ wool

- 29 Read this sentence from the journal.

Some of the tools we use aren't much bigger than a toothpick!

Which of the following tells the correct way to divide the word *toothpick* into syllables?

- Ⓐ too • thpick
- Ⓑ too • th • pick
- Ⓒ tooth • pick
- Ⓓ tooth • pi • ck

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- 30 Read this sentence from the journal.

To find the smaller fossils, we have to scoop up clumps of dirt and put them in bags that have very tiny holes.

What does the word *clumps* mean in the sentence above?

- F bags and tubs
 - G signs and fossils
 - H rocks and stones
 - I lumps and clusters
- 31 Read these sentences from the journal.

So far our team has found six bones! I am on top of the world about this!

Why does the author use the phrase *on top of the world* in the sentence above?

- A to show that she feels happy about her team's finds
 - B to show that her team found the bones high in the mountains
 - C to show that she believes her team members are the best diggers
 - D to show how hard she and her team members have been working
- 32 Read this sentence from the journal.

People at the lab will carefully study the fossils for clues.

If *careful* means “thorough,” what does the word *carefully* mean in the sentence above?

- F not thorough
- G mostly thorough
- H in a thorough way
- I able to be thorough

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- 33 Read this sentence from the journal.

People at the lab will carefully study the fossils for clues.

What does the word *clues* mean in the sentence above?

- Ⓐ bones
 - Ⓑ hints
 - Ⓒ marks
 - Ⓓ pictures
- 34 Which sentence from the journal tells the reader that the dig at Hayden Quarry has been uncommon for scientists?
- Ⓕ “A dream has come true for me.”
 - Ⓖ “All of the fossils will be sent to a lab.”
 - Ⓗ “The fossils we’ve been finding are very different in size.”
 - Ⓘ “Usually it takes months to find that many bones at one site.”
- 35 How does the author’s experience at Hayden Quarry affect her point of view about dinosaurs and fossils?
- Ⓐ She wasn’t interested in dinosaurs and fossils until she went to Hayden Quarry.
 - Ⓑ She wants to study dinosaurs and fossils, but now she wants to do it from inside a lab.
 - Ⓒ She always liked dinosaurs and fossils, and now she is considering studying them for a living.
 - Ⓓ She learns a lot about dinosaurs and fossils, but now she wants to study something different.



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Revising and Editing

Read the introduction and the story “Rolling on the River” before answering Numbers 1 through 5.

Kevin wrote this story in which he describes an experience. Read his story and think about the changes he should make.



Rolling on the River

(1) Have you ever weared a boat? (2) When my family and I was planning a trip to a kayak camp last summer, I learned about kayaks.

(3) I found out that you actually wear them!

(4) A kayak is a type of boat, usually for one person. (5) Kayaks for the sea are long and thin, and kayaks for rivers are short and wide. (6) Our kayaks were river kayaks.

(7) Before you get into a kayak, you put on clothes that help to keep you warm and dry. (8) One piece of clothing is a skirt. (9) The skirt is rubbery. (10) The skirt fastens to a lip on the kayak to help keep water out of the boat. (11) After putting on the skirt, you squeeze into the kayak and attach it. (12) This makes you feel like you're wearing the kayak. (13) For safety reasons, you also need to wear a helmet.

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(14) For the first two days of camp, we learned what to do in case we tip. (15) We did rolls under water, using our paddle to roll back on top of the water. (16) We practiced these rolls in a swimming pool. (17) On the third day, we paddled in our kayaks on the calm part of the river.

(18) Onse I got the hang of paddling, it was fun. (19) Each day, we learned more about kayaking and paddled our boats on more fast water. (20) I liked the thrill of being on a fast-moving river. (21) I tipped over into the river twice, but both times I rolled right back up!

Now answer Numbers 1 through 5. Base your answers on the changes Kevin should make.

- 1 What change should be made in sentence 1?
- A change *Have* to **Has**
 - B change *you* to **you've**
 - C change *wearred* to **worn**
 - D change the question mark to a period
- 2 What change should be made in sentence 2?
- F change *and* to **or**
 - G change *was* to **were**
 - H change *learned* to **learn**
 - I change *kayaks* to **kayak**

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Revising and Editing

- 3 What is the BEST way to combine sentences 8 and 9?
- (A) One piece of clothing is a rubbery skirt.
 - (B) One piece of clothing is a skirt rubbery.
 - (C) One piece of clothing is a skirt, a rubbery skirt.
 - (D) One piece of clothing is a skirt, the skirt is rubbery.
- 4 What change should be made in sentence 18?
- (F) change *Onse* to **Once**
 - (G) change *I* to **me**
 - (H) add a comma after *hang*
 - (I) change *was* to **is**
- 5 What change should be made in sentence 19?
- (A) change *we* to **they**
 - (B) change *more* to **most**
 - (C) change *paddled* to **paddle**
 - (D) change *more fast* to **faster**