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# Unit 5

## Research skills

### Term 2 Weeks 1, 2, 3

National Content Standards: Reading CS 1, 2, 5; Writing CS 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9;  
Grammar CS 1, 2

## Section 1: Texts

### Text 1: Dinosaurs

<sup>1</sup> Dinosaurs are a group of large land animals with backbones (vertebrates) that lived on Earth a long time ago. Some creatures such as cockroaches were also on Earth long ago and are still with us today, but most of the dinosaurs seem to have become extinct. The only animals that are a bit like dinosaurs that are alive today are some of the lizards, crocodiles and turtles.

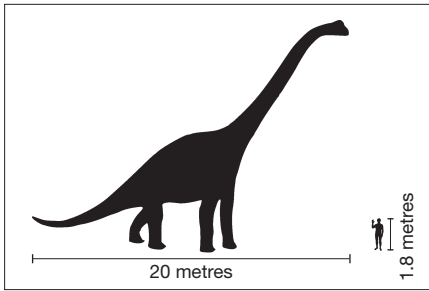


An edmontonia (an armour-plated dinosaur)

<sup>2</sup> Animals can become extinct for various reasons. Sometimes their food supply runs out, or they are hunted by men or other predators. In the past, in New Zealand there was a big bird like a cassowary that could not fly. It was called a moa. However, it has now died out because it was over-hunted. In Papua New Guinea, the bird of paradise is protected by government laws so that it will not be hunted into extinction by people who want its beautiful feathers. Another reason for extinction might be a big catastrophe such as a meteor striking Earth and destroying the environment where the animal lives. Some scientists think that this is probably what happened to the dinosaurs.

<sup>3</sup> Because most dinosaurs died out long ago, we cannot see photos of them. However, people have dug up dinosaur bones or found them embedded in rocks. These bones and shapes of bones that are found in rocks are called fossils. Just imagine if someone found your fossilised bones after you had been dead a long time. From your bones, they would know some things about you, but not everything. Would they know what colour your skin was and what your hair was like? No, they wouldn't, but they would know that you had two legs and two arms and how tall you were and they could probably work out how you walked, sat down and ran. By looking at your teeth, they could perhaps conclude what sorts of things you ate. Today, when we look at pictures of dinosaurs, they are not really completely accurate. By looking at fossilised bones, the scientists have worked out what the dinosaurs maybe looked like, but they are not certain.

<sup>4</sup> We know definitely that most of the dinosaurs had very long bones. Study the comparative pictures on the next page. Most dinosaurs, like the brachiosaurus, were much bigger than people. However, the fossils also tell us that there were a few dinosaurs with small bones, like the little eoraptor.

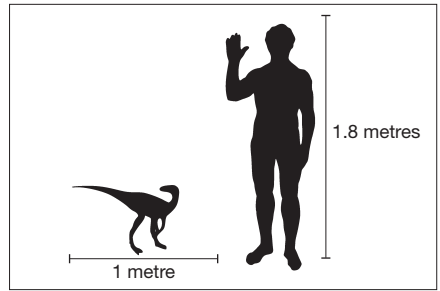


Brachiosaurus

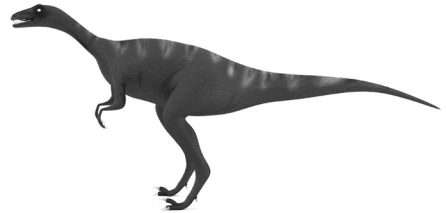
<sup>5</sup> Most of the dinosaurs were upright creatures with either two or four legs. They did not crawl close to the ground like crocodiles, lizards and snakes do. In addition, baby dinosaurs did not develop inside their mother as mammals do. They all seemed to have hatched from eggs like birds or crocodiles.

<sup>6</sup> The fossilised bones of dinosaurs are found on all five continents of the world, including Antarctica, and there are many legends about them. The Chinese word for dinosaur is *konglong* which means ‘terrible dragon’. The Chinese people say that fire came out of the mouths of the *konglong* that lived long ago. When they dig up dinosaur bones, the Chinese people sometimes grind them up and use them for traditional medicine.

Bibliography: 2008 Wikipedia Selection for Schools, United Kingdom: SOS Children UK and Wikimedia Foundation



Eoraptor



This small green dinosaur is called an eoraptor. It liked to steal eggs.



Fossilised skeleton of the head of a *Tyrannosaurus rex*

**Exercise 1 Vocabulary**

Match the words in the first column with the closest meaning in the second column. The words are underlined in the passage.

1 catastrophe (n) (2)	a) ancestral
2 traditional (adj) (6)	b) animals that hunt other animals
3 extinct (adj) (2)	c) a fierce animal that we read about in legends
4 predators (n) (2)	d) fixed firmly into something
5 embedded (v) (3)	e) not existing any more
6 dragon (n) (6)	f) disaster