



## Raising Brain Microschool

February 2026 – Paleontology Unit Study

This month, our learners explored the theme of Paleontology through science investigations, mathematics, media studies, and creative projects. They applied proportional reasoning to create scaled dinosaur drawings based on real fossil measurements and explored how scientists reconstruct prehistoric life. Learners connected fossil discoveries to human evolution while watching *Your Inner Fish* featuring Dr. Neil Shubin and discussing important discoveries such as Tiktaalik.

Learners also explored psychology and media through the Zeigarnik Effect, analyzing how unfinished ideas create suspense in music and advertising. They studied *Für Elise* and created their own cliffhanger-style video advertisements using Canva. Additional projects included collaborative Mesozoic Era Weather Reports, where groups researched ancient climates, land maps, and ecosystems that supported large dinosaurs. Alongside these studies, learners enjoyed outdoor exploration in the bamboo forest, collaborative music activities, and sharing their projects through presentations and videos, blending science, creativity, and teamwork.

We do not teach to standards, however, here are standard connections we made in this unit:

### Virginia SOL Connections:

**Science:** 3.1, 3.8, 4.4, 4.9, 5.1, 5.7, 6.1

**Mathematics:** 4.5, 5.4, 6.7

**History/Social Science:** VS.1, CE.1

**Fine Arts:** Music & Visual Arts Standards

**Computer Science:** K–8 Computer Science Standards

**English:** 3.7, 4.7, 5.7

**Health/PE:** Collaboration, communication, and outdoor activity

### Paleontology & Earth History

- Studied dinosaurs and the Mesozoic Era through fossil evidence and scientific research.
- Explored mammal evolution and homologous bone structures across species.
- Learned about fossil formation, fossil fuels, and climate changes throughout Earth's history.
- Discussed the KT asteroid event and its role in dinosaur extinction.

### Mathematics & Scientific Modeling

- Practiced proportional reasoning and scale drawing.
- Researched dinosaur size measurements and created realistic scaled illustrations.
- Solved equations to determine proportional height and length in drawings.



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### Media, Psychology & Creative Communication

- Learned about the **Zeigarnik Effect** and how unfinished experiences capture attention.
- Analyzed musical suspense in *Für Elise*.
- Studied advertising techniques that create curiosity and anticipation.
- Created cliffhanger-style video advertisements using Canva's video editor.

### Collaborative Projects

- Produced Mesozoic Era Weather Report videos in teams.
- Included ancient climate conditions, land maps, and plant life supporting dinosaur ecosystems.
- Shared projects and presentations through Google Classroom.

### Outdoor & Community Learning

- Explored the bamboo forest during outdoor learning time.
- Created a collaborative classroom playlist.
- Worked together on projects and presentations, strengthening teamwork and communication.