

## Post-visit teacher notes

### KS2 Evolution and adaptation

We hope that the teaching session at Kew assisted in developing the skills and knowledge of your pupils and provided them with an insight into the amazing plants and world-leading plant science at Kew.

Following your visit, you can use the post-visit activity to further support your pupil's learning.

Here is a question and some guidance notes on how to make a plant fossil.

#### Question:



How do scientists know that plants have existed and evolved over millions of years?

You can encourage your pupils to use this key vocabulary:

Fossils, evidence, palaeontology, past, life, organisms.



### Instruction to make a plant fossil



**What you need:** modelling clay/plasticine, paper cups, leaves, plaster of Paris, water, tweezers, a spoon or a lollypop stick.



**What to do:**

1. Roll the modelling clay into a ball. Flatten and smooth it with your fingers.
2. Firmly press the leaf into the clay (smooth side of the leaf facing up).
3. Use tweezers to lift the leaf off the clay, revealing the imprint of the leaf.
4. Create a lip around the edge of the clay – this is to stop the plaster of Paris leaking over the edge.
5. Mix together a small amount of water and plaster of Paris (follow the manufacturer's instructions)
6. Carefully pour the mixture over the imprint on the modelling clay.
7. Leave to dry over night for best results.
8. Once dry, gently peel away the clay to reveal your fossil.





### Health and safety:

When mixed with water, plaster of Paris can get very hot and cause severe burns. Only mix small amounts and never put your fingers in the mixture.

Please refer to:

CLEAPSS Guide PS072 – Using Plaster of Paris in Schools

Health and Safety at Work etc Act (HASAWA) 1974

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Regulations 2002 Management of Health and Safety at Work

Regulations (MHSWR) 1999





## Thinking back to your visit to Kew

How do scientists know that plants have existed and evolved over millions of years?

Discuss your answer with your classmates.

Try to use some of this vocabulary in your answer.

fossils

evidence

palaeontology

past

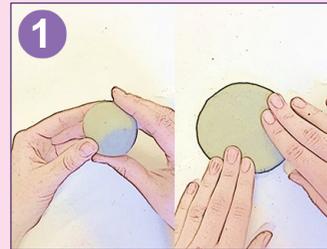
life

organisms





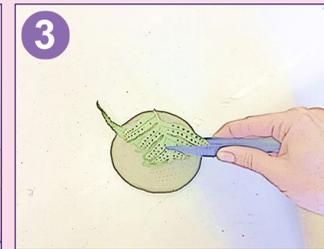
Follow these steps to make your own plant fossil



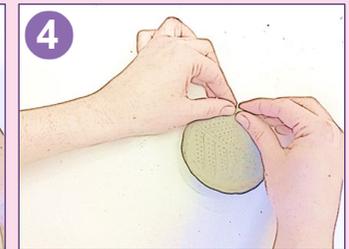
1 Roll the modelling clay into a ball. Flatten and smooth it with your fingers.



2 Firmly press the leaf into the clay (smooth side of the leaf facing up).



3 Use tweezers to lift the leaf off the clay, revealing the imprint of the leaf.



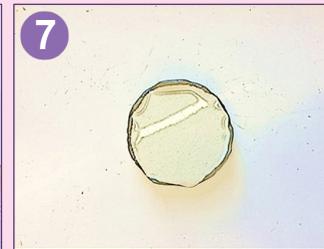
4 Create a lip around the edge of the clay – this is to stop the plaster of Paris leaking over the edge.



5 Mix together a small amount of water and plaster of Paris (follow the manufacturer's instructions).



6 Carefully pour the mixture over the imprint on the modelling clay.



7 Leave to dry overnight for best results.



8 Once dry, gently peel away the clay to reveal your fossil.

