

## Mary Anning videoconferencing session notes

### On the day

- set up the equipment in advance
- prepare pupils by explaining where and with whom they are videoconferencing
- familiarise pupils with the objectives of the session
- explain you will select pupils who have their hands up to ask or answer questions if appropriate
- seat everyone in a well-lit room and so all pupils have a clear view of the screen
- try to have pupils around the videoconferencing unit so they are in view of the camera and can be seen by the presenter
- if appropriate, place one 'hot seat' beside the microphone for students to sit on when they ask a question
- avoid excessive camera movement, eg zooming in and out
- do not try to take control of the presenter's camera
- repeat loudly and clearly anything the presenter cannot hear/understand

### The session (30 mins)

Learning outcomes:

- to understand the process of fossilisation and learn how fossil evidence can be used to deduce an animal's appearance and habitat
- to find out about the life of Mary Anning and consider the attitudes towards woman scientists in the nineteenth century
- to understand the importance of Mary Anning's discoveries for palaeontology and science

This highly interactive session invites children to develop their speaking and listening skills, by bringing one of the Natural History Museum's gallery characters to your classroom.

1. Mary Anning introduces herself and talks about her life growing up in Lyme Regis.
2. Mary explains what fossils are and how the evidence from fossils can give clues about an animal's appearance and habitat.
3. She describes some of the fossils she has found in her lifetime, including ammonites, belemnites and ichthyosaurs.

### This links with the following Units of Work:

[Key Stage 2 Scientific enquiry](#)

[Unit 4A. Moving and growing](#)

[Unit 4B. Habitats](#)

[Unit 5\\_6H. Enquiry in environmental and technological contexts](#)

### Suggested pre-videoconference activities

<b>To understand the process of fossilisation and learn how fossil evidence can be used to deduce an animal's appearance and habitat</b>	
1. What is a fossil?	Use the Museum website to research <a href="#">how fossils are formed</a> . Pupils have to make a cartoon strip explaining the process of fossilisation.
2. Fossil identification	Ask the pupils to bring in any fossils they have at home. Use the Museum <a href="#">Earth Lab datasite</a> to try and identify them. Alternatively, use the datasite to research these different groups of invertebrate fossils: ammonites, belemnites, echinoids, bivalves and crinoids.
3. Reconstructing the past	Using fossils from activity 2 or images from the Museum website ( <a href="#">ammonite</a> , <a href="#">belemnite</a> , <a href="#">echinoid</a> , <a href="#">crinoid</a> ), pupils predict what they thought animals may have looked like. What evidence is left? Is there any evidence of soft parts of the body? What colour was the animal? What kind of habitat did it live in?
<b>To find out about the life of Mary Anning and consider the attitudes towards woman scientists in the nineteenth century</b>	
4. Picture detectives	Study the oil painting of <a href="#">Mary Anning</a> . What can we find out about her from this painting? Pupils to develop questions – either to ask during the videoconference or to follow up after. For example, what is in your basket? Why are you out in stormy weather? Did you wear that dress while hunting for fossils?
<b>To understand the importance of Mary Anning's discoveries for palaeontology and science</b>	
5. Anning research	Use the Internet and books to research Mary Anning's life. Develop questions to answer post-videoconference (or to ask Mary Anning if time during the videoconference).

### Suggested post-videoconference activities

<b>To understand the process of fossilisation and learn how fossil evidence can be used to deduce an animal's appearance and habitat</b>	
6. Reconstructing the environment (science/art link)	Use the images of fossils (activity 3) and understanding of how fossils are formed to reconstruct what a Jurassic marine environment may have looked like. Pupils can include ichthyosaurs, ammonites, belemnites, crinoids and echinoids.
<b>To find out about the life of Mary Anning and consider the attitudes towards woman scientists in the nineteenth century</b>	
7. Scientific letters (science/literacy link)	Working with a partner, use information from pre-videoconference research plus the videoconference to write a letter from Mary Anning to a scientist describing a fossil find. Construct a response from the scientist, considering how women scientists were regarded in the nineteenth century.
<b>To understand the importance of Mary Anning's discoveries for palaeontology and science</b>	
8. Fossil report (science/literacy link)	Use information from the pre-videoconference research and the videoconference to write a nineteenth-century newspaper report detailing a new fossil find by Mary Anning.