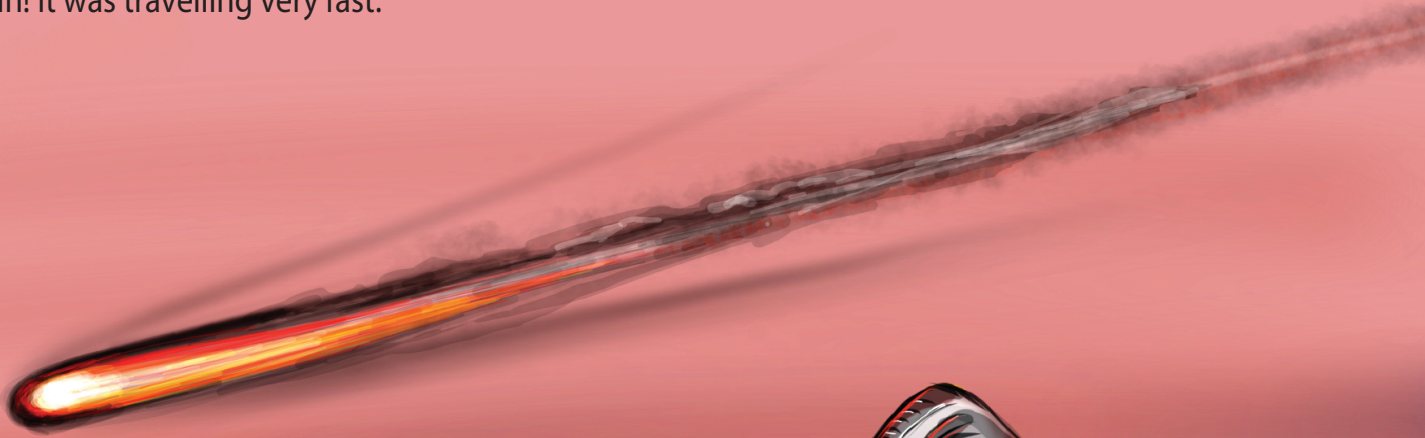


Extinction

Are there any dinosaurs alive now?

A long time ago, the Earth was full of life. The warm seas had lots of fish and marine reptiles swimming in them. Marine reptiles are reptiles that live in the water and swim very well. The sky had lots of insects and flying reptiles flying around. On the ground, dinosaurs and mammals lived in forests and plains.

A long time ago something big happened. An asteroid smashed into the Earth. An asteroid is a big lump of rock that travels through space. The asteroid that smashed into Earth was the size of a mountain! It was travelling very fast.



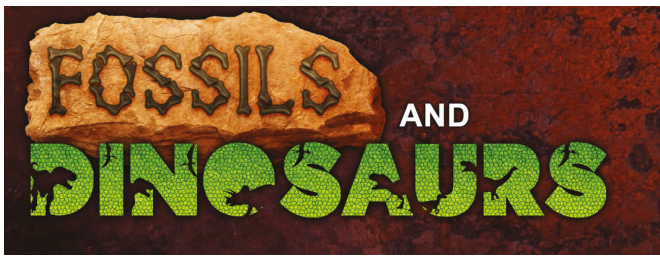
As it came closer to Earth it became a huge ball of fire. The huge ball of fire was brighter than the sun. The fireball lit up the land and skies brightly. When the fireball hit Earth there was a huge explosion. The explosion destroyed everything for miles around.



The explosion sent huge rocks flying up high. The huge rocks then crashed down all over Earth. The falling rocks killed lots of animals. The huge falling rocks were very hot and started fires.

The explosion created a giant wave in the sea. The giant wave travelled very fast across the ocean. When the giant wave hit land, it flooded big parts of the Earth.

Because of the explosion there was lots of dust. There was so much dust that it made the skies go dark. The dust floated in the air for a long time. This meant it was dark on Earth for a long time. The dust and ash also made the Earth get very warm. Some animals and plants did not die in the explosion, or fires, or the flood. However, because it was so dark and so warm, most of these animals and plants died in the end.



Extinction

There is a huge crater in Mexico. A crater is a big dent in the ground. Craters are often made when something hits the ground very hard. Scientists discovered the crater a little while ago. The crater is so big it was probably made by something as big as a mountain. What do you think made the crater?

Before the asteroid, dinosaurs ruled the Earth. After the asteroid mammals ruled the Earth. Humans are mammals. If it wasn't for this huge explosion maybe humans wouldn't be here today.



Are there any dinosaurs alive now?

There are no dinosaurs alive now. There are still reptiles like crocodiles but they are not dinosaurs. Birds have evolved from dinosaurs. Have a look at the "Feathered Friends" activity sheet for more information about this.