



Summary

North American Dinosaurs: Triceratops describes the characteristics of the three-horned dinosaurs. The book focuses on what they ate and how they survived. There is a brief discussion on what scientists believe to be the connection between birds and dinosaurs.

Vocabulary		Comprehension Strategy	Genre Study	Text Features	
carnivore	cycad	Using visualization, Using inferencing	Text structure: Cause/effect, Use of supporting details and description	table of contents	captions
dung	extinct			bold glossary words	
herbivore	territory			index	headings
				text boxes	glossary
				illustrations and photographs	

Standards: Science and Language Arts

- Understands biological evolution and the diversity of life
- Knows that fossils provide evidence about animals that lived long ago
- Knows that fossils can be compared to one another and to living organisms to observe their similarities and differences
- Knows that changes in the environment can have different effects on different organisms
- Knows that different people may interpret the same set of observations differently
- Uses text organizers to determine the main ideas and to locate information
- Summarizes and paraphrases information in texts

Kendall, J. S., & Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Content knowledge: A compendium of standards and benchmarks for K-12 education*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). Online database: www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/

Discussion Prompts Prior to Independent Reading

Vocabulary Building and Background Knowledge:

Read the title as students look at the cover. Ask students to talk about what they observe on the cover and what they already know about the Triceratops. Scaffold a discussion that builds on the background knowledge of students. Introduce students to the vocabulary words by having them examine the glossary on page 23.

Discussion questions:

- Triceratops was probably an *herbivore*. Read the definition. By skimming the glossary, can you give the name of one of the plants it might have eaten?
- Scientists study the fossilized *dung* of dinosaurs for clues on how dinosaurs lived. What else do you think they might use as clues?
- What is a *territory* and why might a Triceratops try to defend it?
- What does *extinct* mean and how does the word apply to all dinosaurs?

Genre Study and Text Features:

State that **North American Dinosaurs: Triceratops** is an informational text. Ask students to skim the headings and illustrations to determine how the information is organized. Then highlight genre characteristics

and text features that will support students in reading the text.

Highlight prompts:

- Why are some of the pictures illustrations and some photographs? In a book about dinosaurs, why is it important to distinguish between illustrations and photographs?
- As you skim the book, notice the captions and text boxes that are written around the illustrations and photographs. Why do you think it is important to read these?
- Read page 4 of your book. The author uses many descriptive words and phrases to describe the Triceratops. How do they help you to visualize the Triceratops? Why do you think it is important that the author uses descriptive words and comparisons in a book about dinosaurs? When you read the rest of the book, notice how the author uses description to tell a story.

Reading the Book:

Have students read the book independently or with a partner.

Comprehension Questions

After students have completed reading **North American Dinosaurs: Triceratops** gather students together for a discussion based on the questions below or assign students to answer the questions independently or with a partner.

- How did scientists know that the T-Rex was an enemy of the Triceratops?
- What are some clues that scientists had that the Triceratops was related to birds?
- Scientists have to infer a great deal of information about Triceratops because they are extinct. Give an example of something that scientists inferred about how the Triceratops lived.

BLM: Extension Activity

Students may use the next page to create an information sheet that includes an illustration, text box, and caption.



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Triceratops

Directions: The author uses text boxes and captions to provide more detail about the Triceratops. Create your own informational page about the Triceratops. Include an illustration, caption, and text box that describes important characteristics of the Triceratops.

