

# Salesbury Super 6 Knowledge Organiser for Mercury Class (Y4/5)

## Learning Focus: Science – Fossils Autumn 2 2025



### Key Knowledge to Learn

1

Fossils **form** when a plant or animal dies and gets buried by mud or sand. Over a long time, the **soft parts** rot away, and the **hard parts** like bones or shells are replaced by **minerals** from water, turning them into **rock**. After **millions** of years, the fossil may be uncovered by wind, rain, or scientists, showing us what life was like long ago.

2

Fossils give us clues about what life was like in the past. By studying them, scientists can learn what **animals** and **plants** looked like, what they ate and where they lived. Fossils help us understand how **living things have changed** over time and what Earth's environment was like millions of years ago.

3

**Mary Anning** was a famous **fossil hunter** from England who lived over 200 years ago. When she was a child, she found amazing fossils in cliffs near her home, including the **first complete skeleton of a giant sea creature called an ichthyosaur**. Her discoveries helped scientists understand that **strange animals** once lived in the oceans and that Earth's history was **much older and more exciting** than people had thought.

### Vocabulary

**Fossil**

The remains or traces of a **plant** or **animal** that lived a very long time ago, turned to stone over millions of years.

**Extinct**

When a type of animal or plant **no longer exists** anywhere on Earth (like dinosaurs).

**Sedimentary**

A type of rock made when layers of sand, mud or tiny bits of plants and animals **build up** and get **pressed together**.

**Imprint**

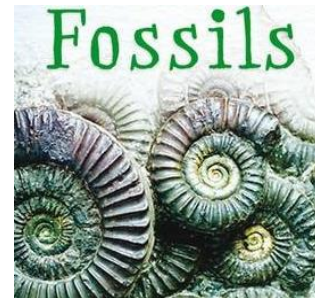
A **mark or shape left behind**, like a footprint in mud that later turns into rock.

**Palaeontology**

The **science of studying fossils** to learn about ancient life and how living things have changed over time.

**Jurassic**

A **time period millions of years ago** when many dinosaurs lived on Earth.



## You can find out more by accessing these links:

[How do dinosaur fossils form? | Natural History Museum](#)  
[Formation of Fossils BBC Bitesize science](#)

[What are Fossils? Science For Kids](#)  
[The life and work of Mary Anning \(dramatisation\) | History - True Stories](#)