

Vocabulary and Section Summary2-4

Looking at Fossils

VOCABULARY

In your own words, write a definition of the following terms in the space provided.

1. fossil

2. trace fossil

3. mold

4. cast

5. index fossil

SECTION SUMMARY

Read the following section summary.

- Fossils are the remains or physical evidence of an organism preserved by geologic processes.
- Fossils can be preserved in rock, amber, asphalt, and ice and by petrification.
- Trace fossils are any naturally preserved evidence of animal activity. Tracks, burrows, and coprolites are examples of trace fossils.
- Scientists study fossils to determine how environments and organisms have changed over time.
- An index fossil is a fossil of an organism that lived during a relatively short, well-defined time span. Index fossils can be used to establish the age of rock layers.