

# Fundamentals of Palaeontology

Palaeontology · Practice Test · 15 Questions

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**1. Which geological period is famously known as the 'Age of Fishes'?**

- A) Devonian
- B) Cambrian
- C) Permian
- D) Triassic

**2. What is the primary substance that replaces organic material during the process of permineralization?**

- A) Amber
- B) Mineral deposits
- C) Volcanic ash
- D) Ice

**3. Which group of dinosaurs is traditionally classified as 'bird-hipped'?**

- A) Theropods
- B) Sauropods
- C) Ornithischians
- D) Ceratopsians

**4. What is a 'trace fossil' most accurately defined as?**

- A) A preserved footprint or burrow
- B) A fossilized tooth
- C) A cast of a shell
- D) A microscopic bone fragment

**5. The K-Pg extinction event, which occurred approximately 66 million years ago, marks the end of which era?**

- A) Paleozoic
- B) Cenozoic
- C) Mesozoic
- D) Precambrian

**6. Which index fossil is commonly used to date rocks from the Ordovician period?**

- A) Trilobites
- B) Ammonites
- C) Graptolites
- D) Mammoths

**7. What defines a 'holotype' specimen in palaeontological taxonomy?**

- A) A specimen found in the most recent layer
- B) The original single specimen used to describe a new species
- C) A fossil that has been reconstructed
- D) The largest specimen of a species found

**8. Coprolites are fossilized remnants of what biological material?**

- A) Skin impressions
- B) Fecal matter
- C) Feathers
- D) Internal organs

**9. Which period saw the first appearance of shelled cephalopods?**

- A) Cambrian
- B) Jurassic
- C) Cretaceous
- D) Carboniferous

**10. What is the study of the processes that affect animal and plant remains as they become fossilized called?**

- A) Stratigraphy
- B) Taphonomy
- C) Taxonomy
- D) Paleoclimatology

**11. Which of the following is considered a 'living fossil' that has remained largely unchanged for millions of years?**

- A) Coelacanth
- B) Dodo
- C) Tyrannosaurus
- D) Velociraptor

**12. What major evolutionary transition occurred during the Carboniferous period?**

- A) Development of the amniotic egg
- B) Evolution of flight in birds
- C) The first appearance of mammals
- D) The extinction of trilobites

**13. In which type of rock are the vast majority of fossils discovered?**

- A) Igneous
- B) Metamorphic
- C) Sedimentary
- D) Volcanic

**14. Which dinosaur group is characterized by long necks and heavy, four-legged builds?**

- A) Theropoda
- B) Sauropodomorpha
- C) Thyreophora
- D) Marginocephalia

**15. What is the primary limitation of radiocarbon dating in palaeontology?**

- A) It cannot date inorganic matter
- B) It only works on fossils older than 1 billion years
- C) It requires radioactive sunlight
- D) It is only effective for samples up to approximately 50,000 years old