

MAKING A TIMELINE OF EVOLUTION

Using a Toilet Paper Roll

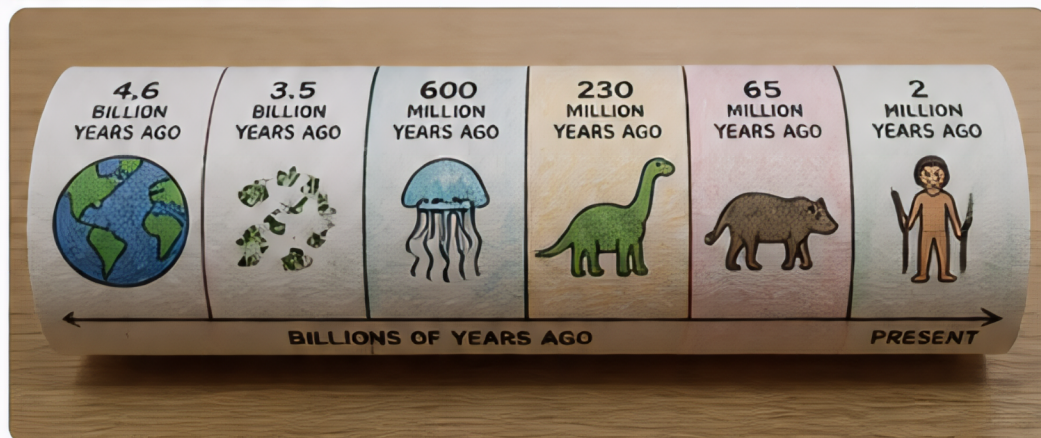
LAB GOAL: To create a timeline of major events in evolution and understand the order in which they

BIG IDEA: Life on Earth has changed over billions of years. By looking at key events in order, we can see how life has evolved.

MATERIALS

- 1 empty toilet paper roll
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Small sticky notes (optional)
- Reference timeline below (or your own research)
- Clear tape or glue stick (optional)
- Scissors (optional)

EXAMPLE TIMELINE



Note: Your timeline can look different! Be creative and make it your own.

BACKGROUND

Evolution is the process by which life on Earth has changed over a very long time. Scientists use evidence from fossils, rocks, and genetic information to build a timeline of important events. You will make a timeline on a toilet paper roll to show the order of major events.

PROCEDURE

- 1 Research the key events in the timeline of evolution using the reference below or other reliable sources.
- 2 Write the events in the correct order from earliest (longest ago) to most recent (closest to today).
- 3 Divide your toilet paper roll into sections for each event. Make each section big enough to draw and write.
- 4 In each section, draw a picture that represents the event.
- 5 Write the name of the event and the approximate time (in years ago) above or below your drawing.
- 6 Add an arrow showing the flow of time from the earliest event to the present.
- 7 Optional: Use small sticky notes for each event first so you can rearrange them before taping or coloring.
- 8 Review your timeline. Make any changes or add color to make it clear and easy to read.

THINK & REFLECT

1. What was the most surprising event you learned about? _____
2. How does this timeline show that life has changed over time? _____
3. What questions do you still have about evolution? _____

REFERENCE TIMELINE

Major Events in Evolution

4.6 Billion Years Ago	Earth forms
3.5 Billion Years Ago	First simple life (single-celled organisms) appears in oceans
600 Million Years Ago	First multicellular animals (soft-bodied sea creatures)
230 Million Years Ago	Dinosaurs appear
65 Million Years Ago	Dinosaurs go extinct; mammals begin to diversify
2 Million Years Ago	Early humans (Homo) appear
Present	Humans continue to evolve and impact the planet



TIP: Evolution happens over a very long time—billions of years! Your toilet paper roll is a model to help us understand that long timeline in a way we can see.

