

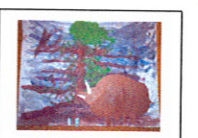
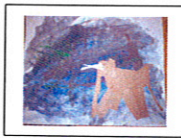
What is a Mastodon?



Written by the Kindergarten Class at GCCS



Fall 2007



Stories: How this expedition started

In the beginning of the year, we studied lots of different stories. We read a book called The Secret History of Tom Trueheart, by Ian Beck. In the book, a family of story adventurers receive letters from the story bureau inviting them to finish story beginnings in the land of stories. While we were reading this story, we were surprised to one day find a letter of our own hidden in our classroom! Here is what it said...

Dear Kindergarten,

We have been watching you and have been most impressed with your study of stories. We are amazed at how much you know about characters and settings. You have learned many stories in the past three weeks. Now you have been chosen for our next story adventure.

A large object, bigger than we have ever seen, has been found near Rochester, NY. Your job is to discover the story of this object. Some of your work will be done in the classroom, but you may need to travel to other places to uncover the whole story. Also, you may need the help of local experts once you discover what the object is. As you journey through this adventure, please record all of your findings so that you can report every detail to the story bureau.

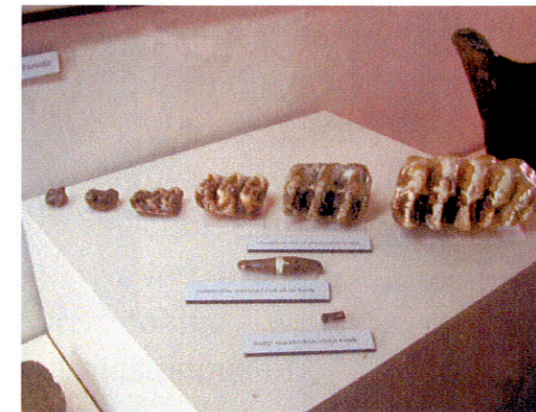
The object will arrive in your classroom on Tuesday, September 25, 2007. Please make a plan and get started as soon as possible! It's so big, Jack from Jack and the Beanstalk is worried!

Sincerely,
The story master

The box

Written by the food crew

The story bureau sent our class a box with a mystery object inside. We opened the box and took the object out. We studied it, which means we looked at it carefully. Everyone got to touch and hold it. We didn't know what it was. Our class talked about the shape and the bumps we saw. We guessed it might be a T-Rex foot or a tooth from a dinosaur, a mammoth or another big animal. We knew it was from a big animal because the object was so big. Teachers gave us papers with pictures of our guesses. We were so excited when we matched the mystery object to a picture of a mastodon tooth! Our class then went to the RMSC because we knew they have lots of information. We looked at the exhibits to see if we could find a mastodon tooth and it matched our object too! Now we had to find out about mastodons! We became paleontologists.

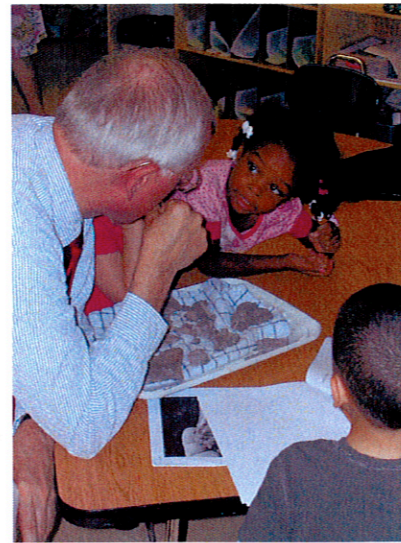


What do paleontologists do?

Written by the Mastodon crew and Fossil Crew

Paleontologists are people who study plants and animals that lived a long time ago. They try to find fossils by looking closely at rocks. Sometimes they have to dig for fossils with tools like pick axes, shovels and brushes.

They look for clues in the fossils to help them know more about what they have found. They look for tool marks in a bone, that tells them an animal was hunted, and at the shape, size and texture of the fossil. Paleontologists find all sorts of animals and plants.



Kindergarten Paleontologists and Story Adventurers: How we uncovered the story of the mastodon

Written by the Habitat crew and Extinction crew

Dear Story Bureau,

Once we discovered that the object was a mastodon tooth, we knew it was our job to tell the story of the mastodon. We wanted to find out what exactly a mastodon was, what they ate, where they lived, the fossils they left behind and how they became extinct.

We traveled to some other places to learn about mastodons and talked to local experts just like you said to in our letter. We went to the RMSC to learn about the mastodon. We saw a model of a mastodon, paintings of mastodons, a glacier, mastodon bones and fossils and a mastodon skeleton. We looked at the mastodon bones, tusks and teeth. A paleontologist named Dr. McIntosh taught us about those fossils. We went to the science museum in Buffalo. We talked to Dr. Laub there. He has been digging up mastodons for 30 years! He taught us more about mastodon teeth, bones and tusks. We learned that elephants are distant cousins of mastodons. We learned more about fossils by going to Penn Dixie. We found fossils of sea creatures that lived before mastodons.

We also recorded our findings like you told us to. At the museums, we sketched and took notes. When we got back from Penn Dixie, we drew the fossils we had found. In Art, we made mastodons out of construction paper. We painted pictures of mastodons, where they lived, the food they ate, the ways they died and the fossils they left behind. We even used our bodies and voices to learn about mastodons in PE and Music. We even wrote a new song about mastodons!

We present this book to the story bureau and to all people who love a good story so that you too can learn about a wonderful prehistoric giant called the Mastodon!

Sincerely,
The Kindergarten class

What is a mastodon?



Mae Kehoe



Emma Bryce

The mastodon is an animal that lived here 12,000 years ago. A mastodon is big. They could grow 9 feet tall. The mastodon had brown fur on his whole body, even on his tail.



Eden Kulp



Roxy Reisch

They had 4 legs and 2 tusks. Tusks could be 7 feet long. Mastodons had a trunk to help them pick up things and put them in their mouth. Elephants have trunks and tusks too.



Tulah Hogan



Aidan Kluge

The mastodon is related to the elephant, like a cousin. They have 2 little ears and a big head. They have 6 sets of teeth. The teeth are pointy like our molars.

Where did the Mastodon Live?



Shawn Trim



Crystal Lee



Daniel Altamura

Mastodons lived in a forest. There were a lot of pine trees there.



Griffin Peter



Trysha Bell

They ate pine cones and needles from trees. There was grass and flowers on the ground. There were tiny ponds there.



Gifford Campbell



Kaydra Martin

There are still some pine trees alive today
It was a cold forest.
Behind the forest, there was a glacier.

Mastodon Food



Derick Douglas



Kalib Baker

Mastodons ate plants and drank water. They did not eat meat. They ate pine trees, grasses, mosses and swamp plants. Mastodons used their tusks to break trees into pieces to eat.



Nadia Burgess



Rachel Donnellan

Mastodons used their trunks to drink water, smell and take baths. They sucked up water with their trunk and sprayed it in their mouths. Mastodons also put water in their trunks to take baths. They used their trunks to pick up tree branches to eat.



John Grieco



Emilia Delvecchio

Mastodon teeth were bumpy so they could eat.
They made a bowl with their tongue to put food
in and chewed with their teeth. Their teeth
moved from side to side like horses and cows.
Elephants and mammoths moved their teeth
forwards and back.

What is a fossil?



Adrian Burgos

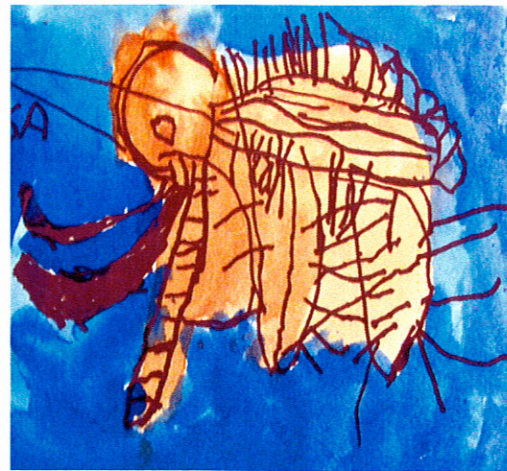


Ella Wulforst

To become a fossil you first have to die.
Then you get buried in the ground.
Layers and layers of dirt, grass, mud and
water cover you for a long time.
It takes 10,000 years to become a fossil.



Abigail Wilcox



Anysa McCrea



Henry Orsagh



Zaria Gibbson- Stevenson

Soft parts of your body rot away.
The hard parts like bones, shells, teeth and tusks
are left. Scientists have to find fossils so they
can learn about the fossils.

The fossils tell what animals lived long ago, that
warm seas used to be here and that some animals
are extinct. Tusks can tell you how old an
animal was and some bone shapes can tell you if
an animal was healthy. Marks on the mastodon
bones even told scientists that mastodons were
hunted. Fossils teach us the world has changed.

Mastodon Extinction



Miles Cold



Monet Rivera

Mastodons used to live in New York State before you were born. But, don't worry, they died out 10,000 years ago. They are extinct.



Keniya Burrows



Ronald Wilcox

Scientists have different ideas of how they went extinct. One idea is that the Mastodons walked north and got trapped by Lake Ontario. It was too big for the mastodons to get across so they got stuck and died.



Luisa Velocci



Ian Byers

Another idea is that hunters killed them.
The last idea is that the weather changed
and all of their food, like evergreen trees
died. Then the mastodons starved.

Thank You!

George McIntosh

Richard Laub

Our friends at Penn Dixie

Mary Claire from the Monroe Library

Parent chaperones

Ms. Lockner

Miss Morell

Mrs. Haymond

The RMSC players