To make the plaster, take 2 scoops of plaster and put them in the 2nd cup. Add 1 scoop of water and stir. Be sure the plaster is well mixed. Pour half of the plaster into the cup over the layer of "fossils". Make sure students do not mix the sand and plaster together as this will cause the layers to disappear.

Carefully add another 1 cm of sand to the cup.

Add a second layer of specimens and pour the remaining plaster over them. Set the cup aside to harden. It is best if it hardens overnight and the activity is continued the next day.

Examine the plaster and sand layers and describe any differences between them.

Compare the stratigraphy cup with pictures of layered sedimentary rocks. Encourage the students to view formations firsthand with their parents in nearby road cuts or rock outcrops.

To examine the specimens in the cup more closely remove the student-made fossils from the cup by laying the stratigraphy cup on its side and cracking it open by carefully pushing down on the open end. Determine if the specimens have changed. (For example, the beans may sprout, leaves may dry out and shrivel, and insects may fall apart.) The specimens may have changed but not "fossilized". The fossil formed is a mold or imprint --type fossil. If the same type of specimens appear in the same layer (like if all the twigs are in the first layer and all the insects are in the second layer) ask "When did the twigs disappear?" or "Were insects more common in the most recent plaster period?"

If You Are Feeling Ambitious…
As a take-home activity, have students examine a pile of laundry in their home. From looking at the layers of laundry, students should be able to reconstruct what they wore each day. You may ask "What was the last thing that you wore?" or "Can you tell what you wore 3 days ago?" Explain that geologists do this with layers of rocks.

Questions to Think About:
- Which layers were formed first?
- Which layers are the oldest?
- How can you tell these

Bibliography


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