

Isotopic Dating Activity

Summary

Students will do research relating half-life and the age of radioactive substances on interesting topics.

Main Core Tie

Science - Chemistry

[Standard 2 Objective 2](#)

Time Frame

2 class periods of 70 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Materials

- [student page](#)
(attached)

Background for Teachers

Time Needed:

About twenty minutes will be needed for an introduction on day one. All of day two (70 minutes) will be used for student research and approximately thirty minutes on day three for class presentations.

Student Prior Knowledge

Students should know the basics of carbon or other half-life dating. They should know enough that as they do the research they understand the material they find. This could be used as an introductory activity and the concepts of dating could be discussed later. This activity can be used as a hook to get students interested in the topic.

Instructional Procedures

Show the [PowerPoint](#) (attached) to introduce the isotopic dating topic. Don't go into too much detail because the students will be researching the next day. Have everyone choose a topic. I usually allow four to five students per group so there are people to present for each topic.

The next day give them a brief overview of how to find good science magazine articles. The Pioneer Library works well if your library has it.

Have the students present what they found to the class. I allow for extra credit if they bring in something extra for their presentation (I've had a student bring in part of a mammoth tusk and another bring in a newspaper article etc.).

Assessment Plan

Give the students five points per question on their worksheet. Tell the kids they need to fill the lines provided.

Bibliography

Lesson Design by Jordan School District Teachers and Staff.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)