

Chapter 2: Earth, stars and space

Dinosaur hunt

Ratings

MESS  DANGER  DIFFICULTY 

Theme

God is; the other comes and goes

Equipment needed

Set of model dinosaurs; hoops; string

Before you begin

The dinosaur hunt in a room/hall need not be included if the group mainly consists of older or less able people. It is fun though! It is best to make some dinosaurs easy to find and some difficult to find and put them at different levels.

Experimental method

Start by hiding the model dinosaurs in your church, hall or garden. When each member of the group has found one, share information about what we know already.

Use a Venn diagram to categorise dinosaurs according to different criteria e.g. carnivores, herbivores and omnivores (see photo online). Think about which features would have enabled dinosaurs to survive in their environments better.

Construct a timeline with string. Get familiar with it by putting a cross on it and some familiar biblical/historical markers. Where would we place dinosaurs? Theistic evolution would subscribe to an old universe (13.5 billion years since the beginning) so their timeline would start then. Young Earthers would put it at 10,000 years and equate dinosaurs with monsters mentioned in the Old Testament such as dragons and behemoths mentioned in Job, one of the oldest books in the Bible.

Big thinking

Dinosaurs have been controversial amongst Christians for decades, since they relate to the theory of evolution. Christian scientists vary as to which approach they subscribe to and how they interpret Genesis. However, dinosaurs are not incompatible with trust in the biblical account, and there is lots of scientific evidence for dinosaurs.

Big questions

God designed the whole world, including dinosaurs, even though he knew they wouldn't still be alive today. What can we learn from this about how creative God is?