**Art Lesson Plan: "Fossils in Art!"**

**Learning Goal**:  
We are learning about fossils and how they can inspire artwork.

We will create our own fossil-themed art using simple materials while exploring the shapes, textures, and patterns of ancient creatures and plants.

### **Materials Needed:**

* Air-dry clay or playdough
* Small objects for making impressions (toy dinosaurs, seashells, leaves, plastic insects)
* Paint (optional: brown, gray, earthy tones)
* Paintbrushes or sponges
* Rolling pins or something to flatten the clay (optional)
* Paper and pencils (for sketching ideas)
* [Images](https://www.google.com/search?q=fossil+cambrian+age&sca_esv=7786c63c048a012b&rlz=1C1CHBF_enCA967CA967&udm=2&sxsrf=ADLYWILqhSEgcsaKD9oQ5vo_OB6buY5pRQ:1729815995090&source=lnt&tbs=sur:cl&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjL5affoqiJAxUsAHkGHQ8WJq0QpwV6BAgDECA&biw=1048&bih=550&dpr=1.5) of real fossils for inspiration (these images are through Google Image search“ Fossil Cambrian Age” Filtered by creative Commons tool)

### **Lesson Plan:**

#### **Introduction :**

1. **What is a Fossil?**
   * Start by explaining what fossils are: the remains or impressions of ancient plants and animals that lived millions of years ago.
   * Show pictures of different fossils, such as dinosaur bones, leaf impressions, and seashell fossils. Discuss how these fossils were formed when plants or animals were buried under layers of sediment and left an imprint as they decayed.
2. **How do fossils inspire art?**
   * Share that fossils often have interesting shapes, patterns, and textures. These natural "artworks" can inspire us to create something new.
   * Briefly show a few examples of fossil-inspired art (could be sculptures, drawings, or even jewelry) to spark their imagination.

#### **Activity: Create Your Own Fossil Art:**

1. **Step 1: Sketch a Fossil**
   * Before using the clay, ask students to quickly sketch what they imagine their fossil would look like. They can think about different creatures or plants—like a dinosaur, fish, or fern—and how the fossil might capture their texture or shape.
2. **Step 2: Create the Clay Fossil**
   * Hand out a piece of air-dry clay or playdough to each student. Encourage them to flatten it into a smooth surface using their hands or a rolling pin.
   * Using small objects (like toy dinosaurs, shells, leaves), show students how to press them into the clay to leave an impression, just like how real fossils are formed.
   * They can experiment with different objects to create various textures, like dinosaur footprints or leaf patterns.
3. **Step 3: Add Details**
   * Once students are happy with their fossil impressions, they can carefully use their fingers or tools to add extra details. They might want to carve around the edges to give their fossil a more natural shape, or use a pencil tip to add fine textures like cracks or lines.
4. **Step 4: Optional – Paint Your Fossil**
   * If time allows and the clay has dried enough, students can paint their fossils with earthy tones like browns, grays, and light greens to make them look more realistic. Encourage them to think about how old fossils appear in nature and to use blending to create an ancient, weathered look.

#### **Wrap-Up & Sharing:**

* Once students have finished their fossils, give them time to share their creations with the class.
* Have a mini "fossil exhibit" where students walk around and view each other's work.
* Encourage them to explain what kind of creature or plant their fossil represents and what they enjoyed most about making it.

### **Conclusion (5 minutes):**

* Recap the lesson by asking questions:
  + What did you learn about fossils today?
  + How did making art inspired by fossils help you think about the past?
* Explain that fossils help us learn about ancient life, and that they can also be a great way to inspire creativity in art!