LET'S MEET T. REX



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Sue, now on permanent display at Chicago's Field Museum, is the most-complete fossilized skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex specimen ever found. Photo by Connie Ma; license <u>CC BY-SA 2.0</u>

To meet the oldest creature in our cast of characters - the T. rex - we'd have to go back to a time when people and animals did not co-exist. What we know about this dinosaur, we've learned from fossils. (This animation depicts the fossilization process.)

<u>T. rex</u>, undoubtedly the most famous dinosaur of all, was a North American <u>meat-eating creature</u> first "<u>discovered</u>" in 1902 by Barnum Brown. That specimen was incomplete.

Six years later - in the same Hell Creek, Montana location - Brown found more <u>fossilized remains</u> (follow the link to reconstruct animals from fossil bones) for the American Museum of Natural History. When viewed together, all the findings provided scientists with a <u>good picture</u> of this <u>enormous</u> carnivore.

In 1905, $\underline{\text{Henry F. Osborn}}$ used a Latin phrase - $Tyrannosaurus\ rex$ - to name the creature. Translated into English, the name means " $\underline{Tyrant\ Lizard-King}$."

The <u>first T. rex mount</u> - made in 1915 and incorporating the 1908 skeleton plus casts of missing pieces from the 1902 discovery - revealed a <u>ferocious creature</u> possessing the <u>power</u> to efficiently annihilate its prey. (Scientists have determined that *T. rex* ate <u>Triceratops</u>, among other things.)

<u>Digging</u> for <u>dinosaurs</u> has <u>resulted</u> in other <u>stunning discoveries</u>. New "finds" have shown that <u>T. rex</u> was <u>not</u> the biggest <u>creature</u> to roam the earth, and its ancestor - <u>Raptorex kriegsteini</u>, or <u>R. kriegsteini</u> - was amazingly small.

Thanks to a relatively recent <u>discovery</u> - near the town of Faith, South Dakota - we can see the skeleton of a nearly <u>complete</u> *T. rex.* Its name is <u>Sue</u>, and it currently resides in <u>Chicago's Field Museum</u>.

Sue's 5-foot <u>skull</u> is enormous and heavy. It cannot be displayed with the rest of <u>the skeleton</u>. Instead, a replica sits atop the dinosaur's fossilized bones while the <u>skull itself</u> is encased, with <u>teeth</u> in place, inside a special glass container. Some of Sue's <u>serrated teeth</u> are more than a <u>foot long!</u>

Although the brain of this massive dinosaur was not <u>fossilized</u>, its braincase was in remarkably good shape. Scientists have determined Sue's brain was about a foot (or 30.5 centimeters) long. Scans of Sue's skull, taken by Boeing's computerized tomography machine, have allowed scientists to create a <u>digitized version</u>.

Sue (whose sex cannot be determined) has given scientists much more knowledge than they previously had regarding the <u>fearsome</u> *T. rex*. But unlike Attila the Hun - the next character we will meet - no one can tell why Sue died.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LET-S-MEET-T.-REX-Night-at-the-Museum

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LET-S-MEET-T.-REX-Night-at-the-Museum

Media Stream



Barnum Brown - Fossilized Dinosaur

From Osborn, Henry Fairfield. "Skeletal adaptations of *Ornitholestes*, *Struthiomimus*, *Tyrannosaurus*," in: *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. 35 (1916), pp. 733-771.

Image online, courtesy the $\underline{\mathsf{Linda}}$ Hall $\underline{\mathsf{Library}}$ Kansas City, Missouri. PD

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T. rex - Fossilized Head

From Matthew, W. D. *Dinosaurs, With Special Reference to the American Museum Collections*. New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1915. Image online, courtesy <u>Linda Hall Museum</u>, Kansas City, Missouri.

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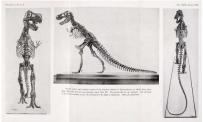


Henry Fairfield Osborn

Image online courtesy the ucmp.berkley.edu website.

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T.rex - First Mount

Image of photo, described above, online courtesy Linda Hall Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

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T. rex - Right-Hind Foot

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T.rex - Arm

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T.rex - Ferocious and Powerful

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T.rex - A Dinosaur Skeleton

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T.rex - Skull of a Killer

Image online, courtesy Chicago's Field Museum.

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T.rex - Teeth of a Killer

Image online, courtesy Field Museum.

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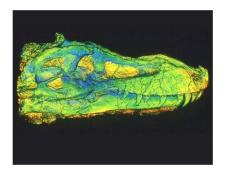
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T.rex - A Single Tooth
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T.rex - A Foot-Long Tooth
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T.rex - Digitizing a Skull
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Video, by NASA; online, courtesy NASA.
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Fossils - Dinosaur Bones



T.rex - Tracking and Killing Prey

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