

Chapter 13 Earth's History

Section 13.3 Mesozoic Era: Age of Reptiles

This section describes the changes that took place during the Mesozoic era.

Reading Strategy


Summarizing As you read, write a brief summary of the text for each heading. For more information on this Reading Strategy, see the **Reading and Study Skills** in the **Skills and Reference Handbook** at the end of your textbook.

I. Mesozoic History

- Begins with most areas above sea level.
- Shallow seas invade most continents.

Mesozoic Era

1. What were the three periods that divided the Mesozoic era?

2. Circle the letter of each sentence that is true about Mesozoic history.
 - a. When the Mesozoic era began, much of the world's land was above sea level.
 - b. Very few marine fossils were found in North America from the Triassic period.
 - c. A major event of the Mesozoic era was the formation of Pangaea.
 - d. Toward the end of the Mesozoic era, the Rocky Mountains began to form.
3.  Is the following sentence true or false? Gymnosperms became the dominant plants of the Mesozoic era. _____

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4. Circle the letter of each factor that explains why reptiles became dominant land animals during the Mesozoic era.
 - a. Reptiles have shell-covered eggs that can be laid on land.
 - b. Reptiles had an important water-dwelling stage (like the tadpole) in their life cycle.
 - c. Reptiles adapted readily to the drier Mesozoic environment.
 - d. Reptiles adapted to fill many environmental niches.

5. What were some unusual features of the ichthyosaurs and the plesiosaurs? _____

6. Which reptiles related to Mesozoic reptiles survive today?

7. Complete the following table.

Changes During the Mesozoic Era	
Continental positions	
Plant life	
Animal life	
Plant and animal extinction	

8. Explain the chain of events that may have occurred if a meteorite collided with Earth, causing the extinction of many plants and animals.

9. Is the following sentence true or false? Dinosaurs were the only large reptiles. _____

10. Is the following sentence true or false? Dinosaurs became dominant land animals for over 100 million years. _____

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