



Archosaur April Absurdity – Lesson Plan for Schools

What is Archosaur April Absurdity?

Missing March Madness? All through April we'll be holding a series of match-ups between different prehistoric creatures! Our competitive bracket will be archosaurs, a group of upright, active reptiles that includes crocodiles, birds, non-avian dinosaurs, and a variety of other extinct families. Throughout the month there will be different face-offs between divisions of animals as shown in the bracket.

If you want to play along, choose which animal you think would be the winner in each match-up. Just like in basketball, contestants are seeded. Animals with the smallest numbers beside their names are the highest-seeded, and stand a better chance of winning. We will be posting a play-by-play of each match written by museum staff and palaeontologists from other museums. Follow along with April Archosaur Absurdity and see how well your favourite fossil creatures do!

Teaching Opportunities with Archosaur April Absurdity

Lesson 1: Scoping out the Talent

Objective:

- Students research the contesting animals competing in Archosaur April Absurdity
- Develop their research, critical thinking, and story-telling skills

Requirements:

- Internet access
- Long-distance face-to-face communication program (Zoom, FaceTime, Skype, etc.)

Procedure:

- Have your students look up the species competing in each upcoming match. This includes the size, shape, diet, and behavior of each creature, as well as what kind of habitat it lived or lives in.
- Have them keep track of where they get their information from, and ask them whether or not they believe what they learned on their own.

- Get your students to fill out their own Archosaur April Absurdity bracket predictions. They'll have to use what they learned in their research to decide which animal would be victorious in each face-off.
- Have your students tell you in a written or oral presentation why they decided on the animals they chose. Get them to defend their decisions using what they learned from their own research.

Lesson 2: The Tournament Begins

Objective:

- Students follow along with the Archosaur April Absurdity competition as it develops
- They keep track of what animals win and lose, and why
- Develop their critical thinking skills, story-telling skills, and further knowledge of natural sciences

Requirements:

- Internet access
- Long-distance face-to-face communication program (Zoom, FaceTime, Skype, etc.)

Procedure:

- Students follow the results of each series of matches on the museum's Twitter account to see who the official winners are each round, and why they won.
- Get them to write their own versions of matches themselves. This can be written stories, drawings, skits, or anything else that suits your class. Student re-telling's of matches should involve a good degree of scientific accuracy, but a healthy dose of imagination adds to the fun.
- Once the tournament has come to an end, work with your students to make your own class competition. This can involve any combination of animals you like, living or extinct. Dinosaurs, mammals, lizards, amphibians, fish, bugs, whatever your students think is neat! This can be a fun opportunity to learn about the diversity of life on Earth, and think about how animals that never met would have interacted with each other