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 Grades: 1-4

## ABOUT *Dinosaurs Before Dark*

*The #1 bestselling chapter book is now a graphic novel!*

Magic. Mystery. Time-travel. Get whisked back in time in the magic tree house with Jack and Annie! Where did the tree house come from? Before Jack and Annie can find out, the mysterious tree house whisks them to the prehistoric past. Now they have to figure out how to get home. Can they do it before dark . . . or will they become a dinosaur's dinner? For the first time in graphic novel—live the adventure again in the very first Magic Tree House book, with new art from comic artists Kelly and Nichole Matthews!

## *The Land Before Time*

When Jack and Annie are whisked off to the time of the dinosaurs, they find themselves in the Cretaceous Period, the last part of the Mesozoic Era, the ending of which is marked by the great extinction of the dinosaur population 65 million years ago. Details provided in the story help to paint a picture of this post-Jurassic period, which, for 80 million years, provided a nourishing environment for its many reptilian inhabitants.

Identify with students the different dinosaurs that lived during this period, labeling them as “carnivores” or “herbivores.” Highlight how physical characteristics enabled them to survive as plant or meat eaters.

Using a cardboard box with its front cut out, bring the Cretaceous Period to three-dimensional life by constructing a diorama. Students can create the natural landscape of hills and valleys, open plains and volcanoes, tall grasses, ferns, and magnolia trees with of paint and natural materials. Dinosaur figures can be made from clay, and students can use the art in the graphic novel for inspiration!

**CURRICULUM:** Science • Arts



## Who's My Kin?

Students learn that dinosaurs are classified as reptiles. Have students generate a list of the characteristics of reptiles and of dinosaurs. Then have them compare and contrast the dinosaurs with present-day reptiles (such as snakes, turtles, and lizards), to the dinosaurs. If interested, have the students illustrate their findings in the style of the graphic novel art.

**CURRICULUM:** Science • Arts

## Can You Dig It?

Paleontologists are scientists who study animal and plant fossils. Discuss how these scientists locate fossils, and describe the tools necessary for excavation. Place items in a tray and cover them with sand. Use string to construct a grid to divide the areas to be studied. Students can record their findings in a notebook similar to Jack's.

**CURRICULUM:** Science • Arts

*Teaching materials provided by Jamay Johnson, second grade teacher; Melinda Murphy, media specialist, Reed Elementary School, Cypress Fairbanks Independent School District, Houston, Texas; and Rosemary B. Stimola, former professor of children's literature at City University of New York, and educational and editorial consultant to publishers of children's books.*



# Mystery Dinosaur: Who Am I?



Read the following descriptions to identify the mystery dinosaurs.  
Then draw two of the mystery dinosaurs!

1. I have huge bat-like wings, fuzzy skin, a mouth like scissors, and a bony crest on top of my head.

WHO AM I?

2. I have two long horns above my eyes and one on my nose. Because I weigh over 12,000 pounds, some people think I look like a huge rhinoceros with a shield behind its head.

WHO AM I?

3. I have a duckbill and make a deep, bellowing sound like a tuba. My kind live in colonies so that some of us can hunt for food while others baby sit the nests.

WHO AM I?

4. I walk on two big legs, swing a long, thick tail, and dangle two tiny arms. The long, gleaming teeth in my huge head tell you that I am one of the largest meat-eating animals of all time!

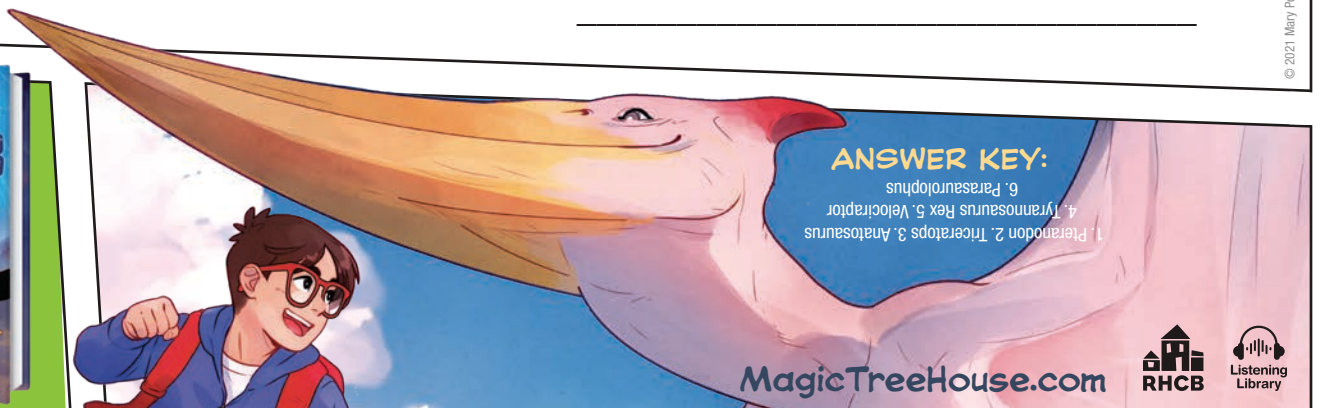
WHO AM I?

5. I may be small, but my long, thin legs have earned me the name of "speedy thief," and my clawed hands and feet make me one of the most dangerous meat eaters around.

WHO AM I?

6. I have pebbly skin and a toothless, spoon-shaped beak that is perfect for eating plants. The long crest on the top of my head slopes backward, and I like to travel in a herd.

WHO AM I?



## ANSWER KEY:

1. Pteranodon 2. Triceratops 3. Anatosaurus  
4. Tyrannosaurus Rex 5. Velociraptor  
6. Parasaurolophus

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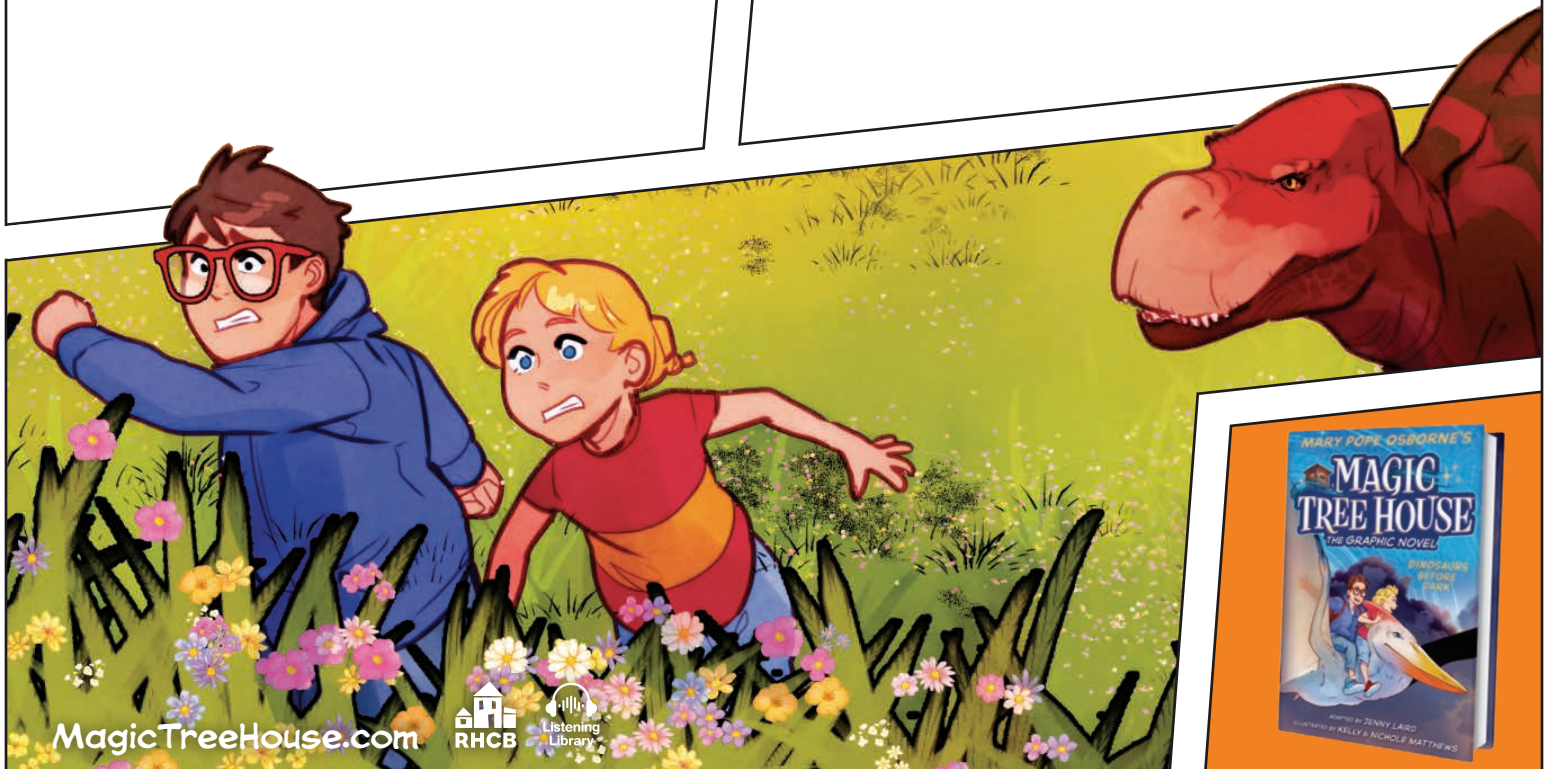
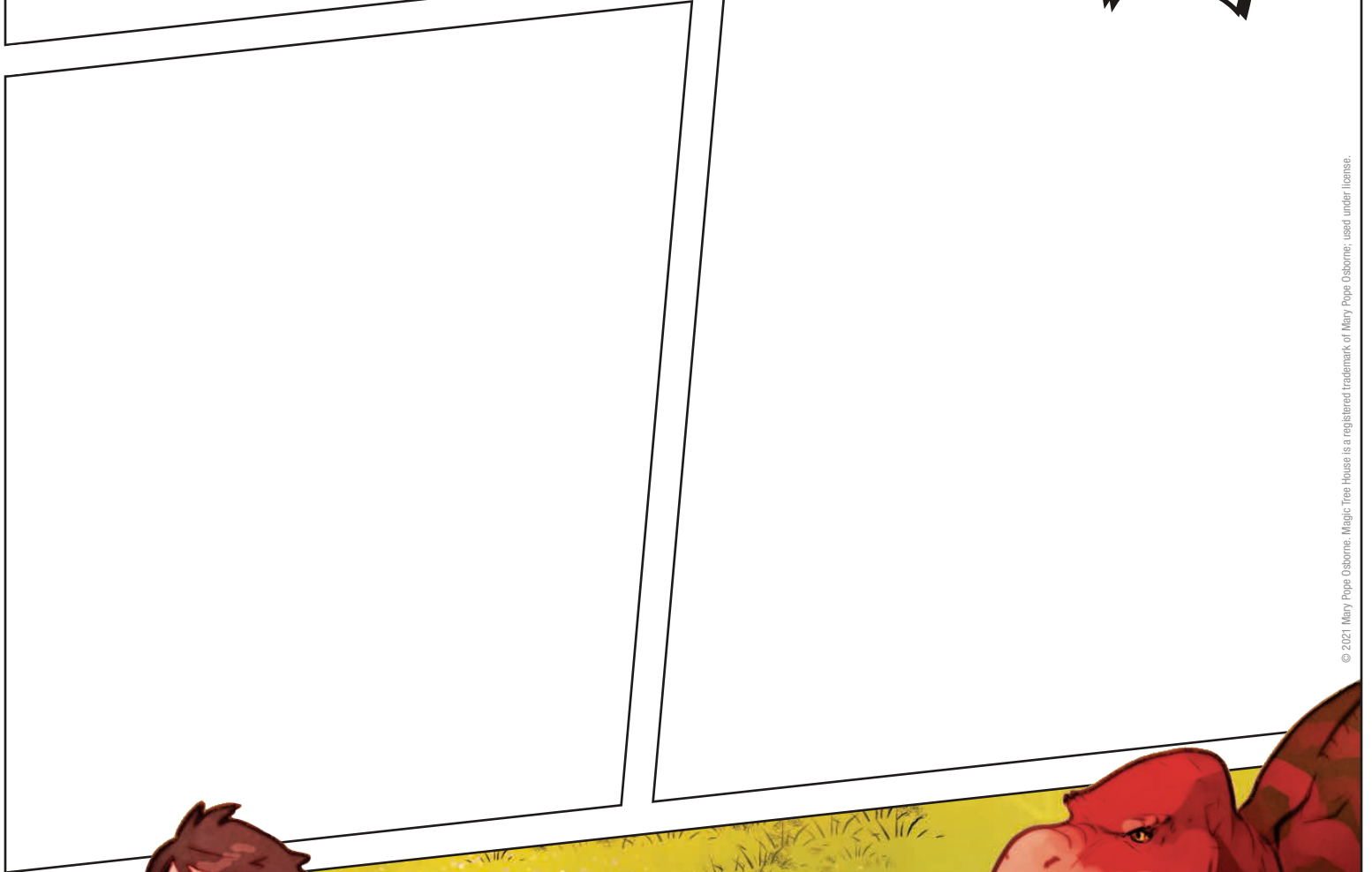




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# MYSTERY DINOSAURS BROUGHT TO LIFE!

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