

## What happens to animals and plants when they die?

When animals or plants die, they start to decompose. Dead plants or animals are usually eaten by something, or bacteria rots them away before fossilisation can occur. However, if they are covered with layers of sand and mud quickly after they die, they can become encased in rock and when they decompose further, they leave behind a fossil. Fossils can be the complete shape of a plant or animal made up by rock, or they can be an imprint (called a trace fossil) left behind in rock, after the rest of the plant or animal material has rotted away.

## What do the layers of bread and the gummy sweets represent?

The layers of bread represent layers of sand and rock and the gummy sweets represent dead plants or animals.

## What helps fossilisation occur?

In order to become fossilised, a plant or animal must be buried quickly and protected from decay. Over time, pressure helps fossilisation occur, as pressure compacts sand and mud to form rock.

## Why do you think the layers are hard to separate?

The pressure has made the layers stick together like the bits of sand and rock that are pushed together over time to make up layers of sedimentary rock.

## When you remove the gummy sweets from the bread what is left behind?

An impression of the sweet or 'trace fossil' in the shape of the sweet is left behind.

See <http://www.energy4me.org/energy-facts/energy-sources/petroleum/> for more facts.