Name:

Partner Name:

***Fossil Cast Lab***

This lab explores how fossils are created and the techniques scientists use to recover them.  In this lab, you will be creating your own fossil and a cast.  Then you will bury the fossil for another group to excavate.

**Activity 1 – Create a fossil and a cast**

**Materials**

* Play dough
* 2 Cups
* Object to create fossil impression (action figure, toy animal, classroom object, etc.)
* Plaster of Paris
* Water
* Gloves
* Goggles
1. Write both names on your cup before beginning.
2. Using your mold material (play dough) press a small amount into the bottom of a cup.
3. Select an object to press into the material to create an impression.  Hold for 10 seconds and remove carefully.
4. Put on goggles and rubber gloves before moving to the next step.
5. Mix two tablespoons of Plaster of Paris and two tablespoons of water into the **empty** cup.  Using the stirrer, gently stir the mixture in a constant motion until a smooth consistency develops.  Let it sit for two minutes.
6. Pour the plaster mixture on the mold you made, let sit overnight.
7. Dispose of the rubber gloves without it touching your skin. Make sure to wash all exposed areas of the body.   **Please make sure to clean up your work station**.

**Activity 2- Excavate a fossil**

**Materials**

* Tray or Paper Towel
* Excavating tools (toothbrush, picks, tweezers, etc.)
1. When the mold has dried, remove the mold from the cup.
2. Using tools, chip away the excess mold so that only your fossil is left.

**Questions and Reflections**

**Answer the following questions in complete sentences.  Make sure you are specific when explaining your answer to receive full credit. Also, don’t forget to answer the questions in a different color font.**

1. How is a fossil created?  Was your process similar or different? How so?

1. What does a paleontologist do?

1. What does your fossil look like? Describe the fossils shape and size.

1. Draw a picture of the fossil on the grid.  Label relevant details and features.

