



Crazy Creatures

Opabinia regalis

Opabinia was a very odd creature found in the Cambrian period about 500 million years ago. It was an arthropod, which means a creature with an exoskeleton.

Opabinia was only 5cm long but was a ferocious predator. It lived in the sea and ate other small animals including very early fish and lots of other arthropods. It was very well adapted to its environment.

Time: 500 Million Years ago

Period: Cambrian

Prawn with a trunk!

Your task 1: Draw Opabinia! It had:

5 mushroom shaped eyes
a long trunk with sharp pincers at the end
a round mouth underneath
fifteen short fins on each side
a tail with five longer fins

Your task 2: Opabinia was well adapted to its environment. This meant everything about it made it good at living in the sea. What kind of environment do you think it lived in?

Think of a sea environment that would need:

lots of eyes

a long trunk

a body for slow, careful swimming

Creature Fact!

There are millions of arthropods around today but none of them are related to Opabinia – it's so weird it is put in a group of animals all on its own!

Your task 3: Opabinia was a fierce predator but didn't have any jaws or teeth! Jaws and teeth help us to chew hard foods. Without jaws, what kind of food do you think Opabinia ate?

Your task 4: No one knows what Opabinia's large trunk was for! What other kinds of animals have trunks, and what do they use them for? Could Opabinia have used their trunks the same way?

Your task 5: Opabinia is one of many famous fossils from a certain very famous place in the palaeontological world. Find out where and find one other fossil from there!

Your task 6: Find out five other facts about Opabinia

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Research key words:

Cambrian
Burgess Shale
Arthropod

CRAZYOMETER!

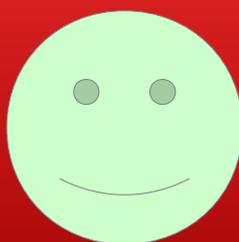
How weird do you think this creature was?



Boring!



Yeah Ok



A bit weird



Really weird!



Woah!



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