Name Period Date

Unit 5 | Handout _____ | *Inferring from Tracks*

Purpose: To discover what can be learned from natural evidence.

Background: Scientists can learn quite a bit from footprints. This activity will expose you to what we can learn from footprints.

Instructions: Around the room are several sets of footprints (each set is the same). Your job is to answer the following question using the available data from the footprints.

1. Study the footprints of Set A.

a. Why might the two footprints be different sizes?

b. Did this animal have a perfectly flat foot or a padded foot (like a dog)?

c. Explain how you know.

d. Did this animal have long claws or dull toenails?

e. This creature lived during the Jurassic time period. Which dinosaur do you think left this trace fossil? (Look at the options in the folder on your table.) **Explain your answer.**

f. These footprints were found with three other parallel sets of tracks next to it going in the same direction. What can you hypothesize about the lives of the dinosaurs that made the tracks?

2. Study the footprint of set B.

a. Did this animal have long claws or dull toenails?

b. How could sharp footclaws be useful to a dinosaur?

c. These footprints were found in a layer of limestone rock that also had fossils of freshwater clams imbedded in it. Explain how this could have happened.

d. This animal also lived during the Jurassic time period. Which dinosaur do you think left this trace fossil?**Explain your answer.**

3. Now compare the two sets of footprints to each other.

a. Which of the two sets was probably made by a four legged, heavier, and slower dinosaur? **How do you know?**

b. Which of the two sets was probably the faster dinosaur? **Explain how you know**.

c. Which of the two sets was probably a predator? **Explain how you know.**

d. For each set of footprints, name a few modern day animals that would leave similar

Set A	Set B

Reflection.

1. What are some thing scientists can learn from footprints? Use the activity we just completed to help you.

2. What data/evidence do scientists look for in footprints to help them learn about organisms.