

Graptolites

Model

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A model of a graptolite can be made from a cardboard tube with pieces of paper stuck onto the outside making the theca and a wire inside representing the common canal.

Evolution cards

A P E 15 min

Students are given 15 or so cards 5cm by 5cm. On each card is a different type of graptolite representing an evolutionary sequence from 32 to 16 to 8, 4, 2 stipes and then changes in attitude and then biserial and lastly Monograptus. Students have to put the cards into an evolutionary sequence.

Graptolite evolution using fingers

G 5 min

This activity is done by the whole class with teacher showing the students what to do. The order of movements is given below.

- 1. Start with two hands touching, all fingers pointing down vertically with no thumbs visible (8 stipes pendant),*
- 2. only one hand fingers pointing downwards (4 stipes, pendant),*
- 3. hide two of those fingers (2 stipes pendant).*
- 4. spread the two fingers as far apart as possible, (declined)*
- 5. turn hand over and point thumb and forefinger in opposite directions (horizontal)*
- 6. turn your hand with two fingers pointing upwards and apart (reclined),*
- 7. close the fingers so they are nearly touching (scandent)*
- 8. now make the fingers touch Climacograptus (scandent biserial),*
- 9. and finally hide one of the fingers so only one points upwards (Monograptus).*

Idea taken from Fiona Harwood

Sycamore seeds

A I 5 min

Some graptolite colonies, autoplanktonic ones, dropped slowly through the water spinning so as to collect the maximum amount of food. The spinning fall is well illustrated by dropping a single sycamore seed from about 3 metres. Students stand on the desk to drop them.

Iapetus ocean

Pa I 5 min

Students are given a map of the lands surrounding the North Atlantic prior to opening of the Atlantic. The map shows locations of Pacific and

Atlantic graptolite faunas. The students must mark on the position of the former Iapetus ocean.

Drink bottle

D or A P 1 minute

Students are given a bottle of water with a plastic strip under the cap which must be pulled off to open the bottle.. This strip looks like a Monograptus and will hopefully remind students of graptolites when they open such a bottle.