If you live in the south of England you might have visited the seaside town of Lyme Regis.

This is Lyme Regis in the summer when holiday makers visit and enjoy the beach.

These people are visiting Lyme Regis beach for another reason. They are looking for something but what are they looking for?

Here's a clue. This part of the coastline is called the Jurassic Coast.

These people are visiting Lyme Regis beach for another reason. They are looking for something but what are they looking for?

Here's another clue. This is a pavement full of patterns. Do you recognise the shapes? Do you know what they are? The shapes make up the Ammonite Pavement in Lyme Regis. What are Ammonites?

Ammonites were around during the age of the dinosaurs. They swam in the sea.

Did you guess that the patterns on the pavement are made with real Ammonite fossils? Why are they there?

The beach in this area is full of fossils. The most common fossil is the Ammonite. Many different types of Ammonite fossils are found. Some are huge!

There are so many fossils around the coast that people can buy fossil maps that tell them where to look. There are also guided tours to help people find the best places to look for fossils.

As the cliffs crumble and the sea crashes over rocks on the beach, more and more fossils come to light.

Do you know what fossils are and how they were made?

When an Ammonite died, the soft parts of its body rotted away until all that remained was its shell. Then the shell was squashed into the mud. Everything was squashed into the mud to make a rock and that turned the Ammonites' shells into fossils.

How do you think the Ammonite fossils were discovered? Palaeontologists are scientists who search for fossils. The fossils tell them about creatures that lived long ago. When the first Ammonite fossils were found, the palaeontologists were very excited. Now there are many Ammonite fossils on the beach that everyone can join in the search for them.

Over thousands and millions of years, the cliffs have been built up from layers of soil and rock. Squashed between the layers are fossils that were once the dead bodies of creatures that lived long, long ago.

What other fossils do you think there might be?
The world is full of fossils – if we know where to look. Long ago, fossils were often discovered by accident and the people who discovered them didn’t really understand what they were.

In 1676, more than 300 years ago, Robert Plot discovered a huge thigh bone. He had no idea what it was. He thought it probably belonged to a giant human being!

One hundred and forty years passed and then more bones like it were found in a quarry.

Much later scientists decided that the bones belonged to giant reptiles. It wasn’t until William Buckland found even more bones in 1824, that he eventually realised they belonged to a dinosaur.

He named the dinosaur fossils Megalosaurus, which means Great Lizard.

It was a very important discovery.

Since those early days, many different fossils have been found and many different dinosaurs identified and given names.

Now anyone can search for fossils and maybe they too will find something interesting!

The most exciting discovery was in 2000 when someone found the fossilised skeleton of an entire dinosaur – a Scelidosaurus. There’s a plaster cast of it in the museum at Lyme Regis.

Scelidosaurus was a plant-eater that used armour to defend itself.

Is this what Scelidosaurus would have looked like?