

# Earth's History

# Precambrian Time

- [Origin of the Earth](#)
- Look at the Precambrian Timeline, p. 216 in book
- Few fossils found in Precambrian rocks. Why?
  - Hundreds of millions of years of changes
  - Precambrian life-forms did not have hard structures
- First shelled organisms appeared
- Earth mostly covered by shallow oceans by end of Precambrian time



# Paleozoic Era

- 542 million years ago-251 million years ago
- Changes in the Earth
  - At beginning-land scattered around Earth
  - At end-one large land mass: Pangaea
- Life on Earth
  - Cambrian explosion: many new life forms develop in a short amount of time
  - Sea-dwelling invertebrates → First vertebrates (primitive fish) → First amphibians and land plants → First reptiles

# Paleozoic cont.

- Natural evolution or creation?
  - Cambrian explosion: abrupt appearance or common ancestor evolution?
- Mass extinction at end of Paleozoic Era
  - 90% of marine organisms and 78% of land organisms died

# Mesozoic Era

- 250 million years ago – 65 million years ago
- Pangaea broke into smaller continents
- Known as the Age of Reptiles
  - dinosaurs
- First birds and mammals appeared
- [Early dinosaurs video](#)
- Mesozoic ends with mass extinction
  - Impact hypothesis most widely accepted
  - [Late dinosaurs video](#)

# Cenozoic Era

- 65 million years ago-present
- Continents moved to present location
- Known as the Age of Mammals
- Climate changes cause extinction of some mammals and proliferation of others
- Modern animals and humans develop
- [Video](#)