

1. mould	the hollow part of a shape formed by the burial of a fossil
2. mutation	a sudden change in the features of an organism which may be transmitted to offspring if it takes place in a sex cell
3. natural selection	the process whereby organisms better adapted to their environment tend to survive and produce more offspring; the theory of its action was first fully expounded by Charles Darwin, and it is now regarded as be the main process that brings about evolution
4. photolysis	the use of radiant energy such as visible or ultraviolet light to produce chemical changes
5. radioactivity	the property possessed by some elements (e.g. uranium) of giving off minute particles from their atomic nuclei
6. radiometric dating	the determination of the age of rocks, minerals and once living material by measuring the levels of certain radioactive elements
7. relative dating	determining the age compared to other rocks based on the fossils present, the law of superposition or other method
8. selective pressure	factors that influence the direction of natural selection
9. sexual reproduction	any form of reproduction where a sperm fertilises an ovum, and the resulting cell develops into a new organism
10. species	the smallest commonly used scientific unit of classification; a group of living things that can breed with each other to produce fertile offspring
11. strata	sedimentary rocks that are formed in layers
12. stratigraphic trap	a change in physical properties of the reservoir layer itself which can trap oil and gas
13. stratosphere	the part of the Earth's atmosphere which extends from about 11 kilometres above the surface to 50 kilometres in which clouds rarely form
14. stromatolite	layered structures formed in certain limestones due to the activity of cyanobacteria in warm ocean waters
15. thrombolite	non-layered mounds produced by cyanobacteria; similar to stromatolites
16. variation	the differences between members of the same species of plants, animals, etc.