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## JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

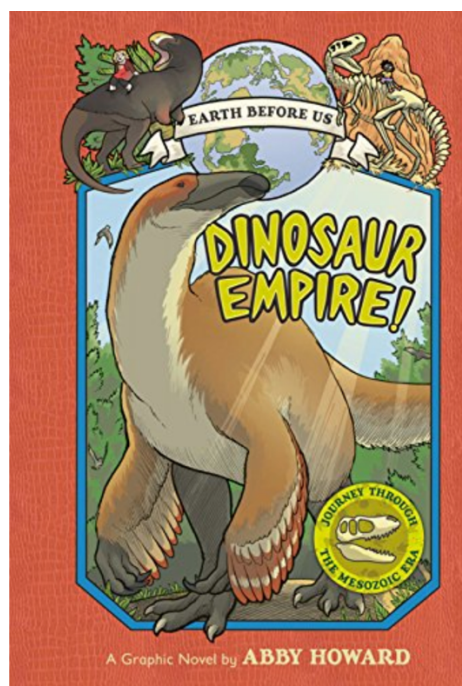
### Review of *Dinosaur Empire!: Journey through the Mesozoic Era* Written & Illustrated by Abby Howard

**Adult/Educator Reviewer:** Tairan Qiu

The University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**Student Reviewer:** Xu Chen, 9th Grade

Kunming, Yunnan, China



Citation: Howard, A. (2017). *Dinosaur Empire!: Journey through the Mesozoic Era*. New York, NY: Amulet Books.

ISBN: 978-1-4197-2306-3

### Adult Review: Tairan Qiu

Prior to reading *Dinosaur Empire!: Journey through the Mesozoic Era* (Howard, 2017) with Xu, I assumed that it would be a graphic fiction novel. However, upon reading it, I realized that it is more than just fiction. Ronnie, who attends fifth-grade at City Town Elementary School fails her dinosaur quiz at school. As she worries about how she could learn all about dinosaurs in 24 hours to pass her make-up quiz, Miss Lernin, a retired paleontologist, invites Ronnie to join her on an adventure in her recycling bin. The bin takes them through a time tunnel and brings them right to 205 million years in the past to the Mesozoic Era. Through traveling into space in addition to walking and swimming around the dinosaurs' habitats, Ronnie learns about evolution, facts about Earth, climate change, and scientific knowledge about dinosaurs in the late Triassic, the Jurassic, and the Cretaceous ages. Ronnie is granted the opportunity to interact with real-life dinosaurs and reptiles in person. In the end, Ronnie gets a perfect score on her quiz and becomes a dinosaur expert among her peers.

This book is perfect for readers who are enthusiastic about creatures and life in the prehistoric ages. Not only does this book have an engaging storyline, but it also provides readers with scientific facts about the names (including pronunciations), habitats, foods, living habits, bone shapes, families, and extinction processes of various dinosaurs, reptiles, mammals, and insects. Ronnie and Miss Lernin interact with each other through questions and dialogues. Their conversations not only pull the storyline together but also function as the narration of the beautiful and detailed illustrations of this scientific graphic novel. Each panel in this book includes a detailed illustration of the creatures as well as

their surrounding environment. Readers could visually see facts about the dinosaurs and other animals (e.g., color, size, limb shape, teeth size, food type, habitat, etc.). Additionally, the glossary at the end of the book provides readers with a hub for key scientific terms that repeatedly appears throughout the book.

By engaging with the text through multimodal registers, young readers are able to bring scientific facts to life and learn about the evolution of prehistoric animals and how that period of time has influenced the world that we live in today. Additionally, the entangling of words and pictures provide emergent bilinguals and visual learners with an opportunity to visualize print texts and also become active readers of the book.

For educators, *Dinosaur Empire!: Journey through the Mesozoic Era* (Howard, 2017) would not only be an excellent addition to English Language Arts teachers' bookshelves, but it would also be a great resource for science teachers to engage young readers in content area literacy development. I highly recommend this book!

### Student Review: Xu Chen

After I read this book, I learned a lot of facts about dinosaurs. I now know what time dinosaurs lived, how long they lived, where they lived, the environment at that time, and why they disappeared. I also learned how to say a lot of the words I know about dinosaurs in English.

I think the book is very nice. It has a lot of pictures on it. The pictures can help me understand more things when I read because this book is in English. But, I think the dinosaurs in the picture should be cooler (maybe more handsome). I think I can

recommend this book to my classmates and my friends if they also like dinosaurs as much as me.



### References

Howard, A. (2017). *Dinosaur Empire!: Journey through the Mesozoic Era*. New York, NY: Amulet Books.