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Both these picture books start with a close-up image of a dinosaur face and invite readers to view the prehistoric world through their eyes. The texts are deceptively simple but complement the stunning illustrations. Author and illustrator have judged what is likely to be just the right amount of detail a six- to eight-year-old needs to get a genuine sense of the lives of the creatures in their landscape.

The pictures give much information not easily expressed verbally - the relative size of the different dinosaurs, the textures and colours of their skin, the way their eggs are placed in the nest. However, written text communicates some kinds of information best - the spiky tail of the ankylosaurus ends in a club 'made of bone', and prey smells - 'the stink of the carcass hangs in the air'. Wallace brings in exciting imagery telling us that an ankylosaurus is 'huge like a tank' and a tyrannosaurus has jaws that 'shut like a trap'. The constant dangers of the prehistoric world are made evident. In **I am an Ankylosaurus** we see the creature building her nest and we care about whether she survives the attack by the hungry tyrannosaurus. A triceratops is devoured by a tyrannosaurus in **I am a Tyrannosaurus** and then the victor is driven away by one of its own kind only to become caught up in a volcanic eruption hurling dust and hot lumps of rock.

I have some misgivings about the occasional anthropomorphism in the books. Creatures feel hunger and fear of course, but I'm less sure about calling dinosaurs 'cowardly' or 'thieving'. The author and illustrator draw on the advice of Dr Angela Milner of the Natural History Museum, London. It is never too soon to start thinking like a scientist and, with this in mind, I would have welcomed an appendix showing some relevant fossil evidence to support the text - for example of the nests so well described in **I am an Ankylosaurus**.

While CDROMs and software packages use multi-media to bring alive the sounds and movements of creatures, print books of this quality offer a different and equally valuable experience for children by telling a compelling story through words and image.

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