

Name _____

Date _____

Literacy Lab #19: "Titanoboa"

Living Environment: Comet 2011-2012

"Titanoboa!"

Directions: Take a few minutes to read the article below either online (or on the back of this page.) Write responses to the statements or questions below. Cut/copy/paste is not allowed – use your own words and thoughts, based in research if needed.

Read more: <http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2012/03/26/grand-centrals-gigantic-snake-amazes-commuters/?intcmp=features#ixzz1qJwVNTRv>

Fact-finding: List three facts that you learned in this article.

1.

2.

3.

Vocabulary: List and define three unfamiliar words in the space below.

Implications: What are your feelings about this "discovery"? Why is this type of discovery important/unimportant? Fully explain your answers.

Titanoboa! 45-foot-long prehistoric snake amazes NYC

Jennifer Welsh /
LiveScience.com

NEW YORK – A strange sight accosted visitors at Grand Central Station last week: a gigantic snake. A life-size model of the 60-million-year-old Titanoboa has taken stage at the train terminal, an advertisement for a new documentary on the Smithsonian Channel.



"That thing would swallow me whole," Grand Central visitor Sarah Bourouque said when she saw the giant snake. "I'd have to run and hide if I saw that thing in real life."

Remains of the ancient Titanoboa snake, which weighed in at a whopping 2,500 pounds (more than 1,100 kilograms) and a length of 48 feet (almost 15 meters), were first found near fossilized plants, giant turtles and crocodiles dating back to the Paleocene Epoch (about 60 million years ago). This was when the world's first known rain forest emerged, and dinosaurs no longer ruled the Earth.

"It was an actual animal? A real animal? It's huge, that's impressive," visitor Chris Wood said, eyeballing the giant reptile. "It's pretty impressive — I don't know what to make of it, really."

The snake is situated on an elevated platform, stuck eternally ingesting an ancient crocodile. It is on display in Grand Central's Vanderbilt Hall, just off the main concourse. [Photos of Titanoboa in Grand Central]

Natalie Remor brought her kids to see the giant snake: "Oh, it's great, they love it!" Her son Ian was especially enchanted by the sight. "It's a really, really, really long snake!" he said.

The startling discovery of Titanoboa was made by a team of scientists working in one of the world's largest open-pit coal mines at Cerrejon in La Guajira, Colombia.

Another visitor, Jason Panaro, said of the giant snake: "It really puts things in perspective to see things like that."

The life-size replica of Titanoboa is going on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History on March 30, but before it gets settled in at its new home in Washington, D.C., the monster snake took a side trip to New York City for a two-day "layover."

On April 1, Smithsonian Channel premieres a new documentary, "Titanoboa: Monster Snake," which takes an in-depth look at the process of discovery and reconstruction of this prehistoric giant snake.

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