

Meet a Plesiosaur

So if you look carefully, I've set something up here to demonstrate how things work in life size. So you can just about see that I've set down a tiny little model of a plesiosaur, a 90 million year old marine reptile that you might be familiar with from '*Fossils and Dinosaurs*'? But just down here, if I press, if I tap this and go to life size, then we can bring that literally to life size. You can even see, hopefully it doesn't eat that person just going past.

Erm, this is what a Plesiosaur would look like, that's exactly the scale it is. And what's quite nice now; so if you were outside or if you're in the sports hall or somewhere like that, you go for a walk along the Plesiosaur and just see how long it is and just see how long it takes to walk past one. And what would you feel like walking underneath one, looking up at it, its face, its mouth, its jaws and everything?

So this is really, really powerful. This, this is where something like this crosses over into that VR zone, because although we are holding the iPad steady here, so it could be filmed, if we were free, which of course normally would be, we would walk around and we would be exploring that as well.

So now we get a sense of what it would be like to be very, very close to a Plesiosaur. And already we are getting a sense of the scale of it and just how long it is and how amazing it would be to walk alongside one. And also we get a great sense of the motion of how it swam along with the sea as well. This sort of lovely motion with the fins and everything not quite whale-like and not quite fish-like, but almost like a bird.

And don't forget that as we're doing this, I can tap the record button. So, I might have been given an activity; part of this might be to record my thoughts. And I might have written this down first as a writing exercise, perhaps as a palaeontologist, or perhaps in some kind of scenario where I've just come across this in real life, in my submarine or something or the bottom of Loch Ness so I can tap and record and now start to talk.

"Here I am at the bottom of the Jurassic depths of the ocean, 90 million years ago, and I've just come across this incredible Plesiosaur and it's just swimming alongside, beside me and so on and so forth. And I can record all of that. Press stop on that! And you can see it's got my thoughts now recorded and I can share that. I'm just going to delete that."

One of the things I'm thinking straight away while I'm doing this is like how long it is, how long it took to actually go past it. And just just to those that are interested as well. Why do we put shadows and things inside experiences like this? Because it just makes it more realistic, so it just aids that whole effect that this is actually happening when you can see in shadows on the floor. It's really, really important when they're not there, it does change it slightly. So it all adds to the whole effect of immersion. Don't forget, this is all about immersion and creating that moment for the students to feel. But actually, I have a memory of walking alongside a plesiosaur or not seeing a picture of one or a video one. But I actually saw

one today. It was in our sports hall or it was outside. And that's quite a memorable experience. When it's a memorable experience that aids the learning process quite dramatically.

And of course, at the end of it, we can just take it down to small size so it could fit on the top of your desk or your floor or wherever it was you're going and who knows? Maybe you'd even get, I don't know what to be called, but a whole bunch of Plesiosaurs together.