

Theory 1

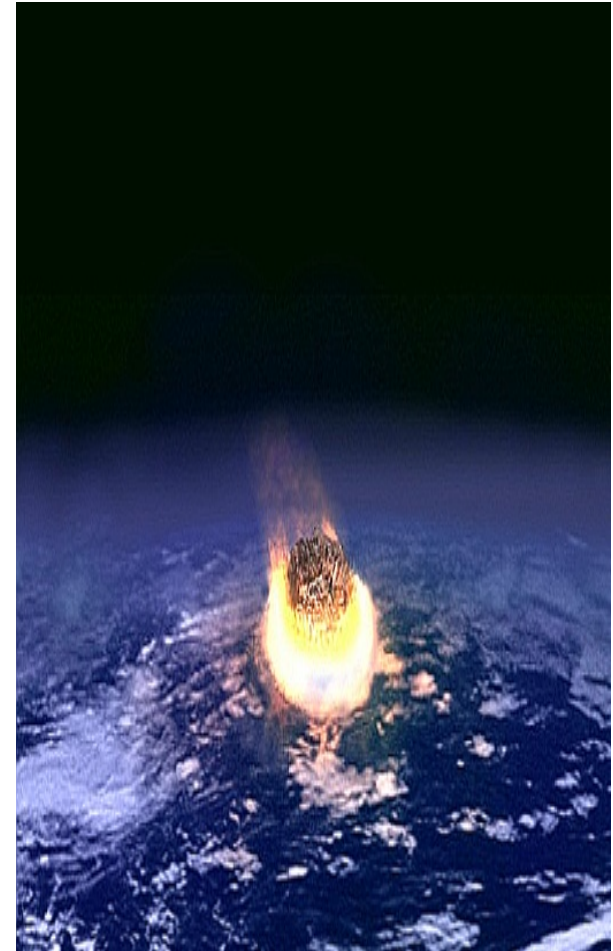
Asteroid Impact -

Theory 1 says that the dinosaurs were killed by a huge asteroid which collided with the Earth.

How did it happen?

1. A 10km wide asteroid travelling at great speed struck the Earth. The blast and shockwave killed everything in its path.
2. Billions of tonnes of dust were thrown into the air and the sky turned black.
3. With no light, the plants died. Shortly after all the dinosaurs would have died, too.

- + Scientists think a huge crater, 65 million years old, near Mexico was caused by the asteroid.
- + A layer of metal, called iridium, is found in rocks that are 65 million years old. Iridium is rare on Earth but found in asteroids.
- Fossils show that dinosaurs died out over a long time and BEFORE 65 million years ago.



Theory 2

Excessive Volcano

Theory 2 says that a series of enormous volcanic eruptions wiped out the dinosaurs.



- + Scientists have found ancient lava flows in India that are the size of France. They are 65 million years old.
- + Other extinctions in history have been caused by volcanoes.

– A layer of soot is found in rocks all over the world that are 65 million years old. Lava can start fires BUT not across oceans and seas.

How did it happen?

- 1 A chain of volcanic eruptions made enough lava to fill an area the size of France.
2. Each volcano let out huge amounts of sulphur dioxide gas.
3. This made the Earth cold and over the next hundred or thousand years, the Earth was gripped by a terrible winter.
4. The dinosaurs could not survive such harsh conditions. They became extinct, along with many other animals.

Theory 3

Radiation

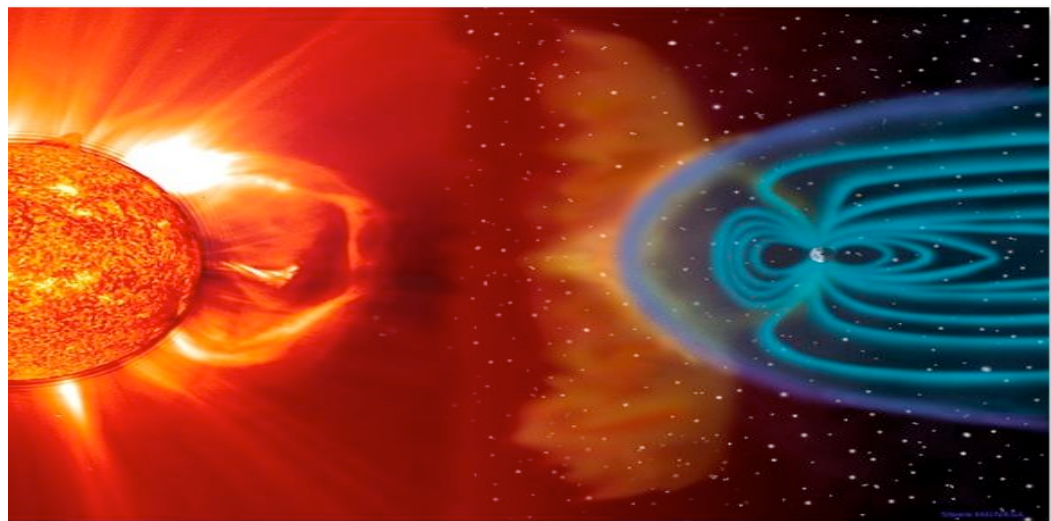
Theory 3 says a blast of deadly radiation from space destroyed the dinosaurs.

How did it happen?

1. A nearby star exploded as a supernova. It produced a deadly wave of cosmic radiation. The radiation destroyed the Earth's atmosphere.
2. A lot of the vegetation and animals were 'fried'.
3. Most of the survivors were then wiped out by radiation sickness or cancer.

- + Dinosaur fossils from 65 million years ago all show high levels of radiation.
- + Some fossils are so good that scientists think that the radiation helped protect them by killing bacteria.

- There is no evidence that the radiation actually came from space



Theory 4

ICE AGE

Theory 4 says that the dinosaurs died off during a freezing winter that lasted for years

How did it happen?

1. The Earth was plunged into winter by an unknown event that blocked the sun.
2. Plants could not grow and this would kill off many of the world's species, including the dinosaurs

- + **Researchers in Holland have found fossils of cold water sea plankton in what would have been a warm sea near Africa**
- + **The fossils are 65 million years old and show a sudden drop in temperature**
- **Scientists cannot explain what caused the temperature to drop so suddenly**

