## *Archaeopteryx* - The ‘missing link’ between dinosaurs and birds

**Possible answer:**

## Archaeopteryx lived in the [Late Jurassic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Late_Jurassic) around 149-151 million years ago.

## Archaeopteryx exhibits both reptilian and bird like characteristics and is therefore known as the ‘missing link’ between birds and dinosaurs.

## *Archaeopteryx* had wings (although it couldn’t fly), feathers, and a wishbone much like modern birds.

* *Archaeopteryx* had jaws with sharp teeth, rather than a beak like birds.
* It also had a flat **sternum** (breastbone). Most modern birds have a keeled breastbone, which allows them to attach powerful flight muscles.
* *Archaeopteryx* also had three fingers with little claws on the end of its wings that would allow it to grasp prey.
* It had extensible second toes known as ‘killing claws’.
* The hallux, or first toe, in *Archaeopteryx* appears to be flexible, a trait not seen in remains of dinosaurs.
* It had a long, bony tail.

**Bibliography:**

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