## A Survey of the Variance in Dinosaur Name Pronunciations in Selected Children's Books

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<u>Alamosaurus</u> AL-a-mo-SAW-rus

<u>Albertosaurus</u> al-BUR-toe-SAW-rus al-BER-tuh-sawr-us

el-ber-toh-SAWR-us <u>Allosaurus</u>

AL-o-SO-rus <u>Ceratosaurus</u> AL-oh-SAW-rus AL-uh-sawr-us

al-uh-SAWR-us\* AL-o-sore-us <u>Cetiosaurus</u> al-oh-SAWR-us AL-uh-SAWR-us\*

AL-oh-SORE-us Chasmosaurus <u>Altispinax</u> **KAZ-moh-SAW-rus** al-tuh-SPY-nax KAZ-muh-sawr-us

**Amargasaurus** ah-MAHR-guh-SAWR-us

see-lo-FI-sis see-lo-FISE-iss <u>Anatosaurus</u> see-lo-FIE-sis an-at-oh-SAW-russ SEE-low-FIE-sis an-AT-o-SAWR-us ah-NAT-uh-sawr-us SEE-lo-FIE-sis ah-NAT-o-sore-us

**Anchiceratops** <u>Coelurosaurus</u> ANG-kee-sair-a-tops

<u>Coelurus</u>

see-LURE-us

komp-SOG-nuh-thus

kon-FYOO-shus-OR-nis

ko-RITH-uh-SAWR-us

<u>Cymbospondylus</u>

die-NON-ih-kus

<u>Dilophosaurus</u>

<u>Dimetrodon</u>

dye-LO-fo-SAW-rus

dye-LO-fu-sawr-us

dye-MET-ro-don

**Confuciusornis** 

<u>Ankylosaurus</u> an-KILE-oh-SAWR-us

ank-eye-loh-SAW-russ an-KILE-o-SAWR-us\* Compsognathus ANK-ee-lo-SAW-rus comp-sog-NAYTH-uss an-KY-loh-SAW-rus komp-so-NAY-thus\* ang-kile-uh-sawr-us **KOMP-so-NAY-thus** an-KILE-o-sore-us\* komp-so-NAY-thus\* ANG-kuh-lo-SAWR-us komp-sog-NAY-thuss

<u>Apatosaurus</u> a-PAT-uh-saw-russ a-PAT-oh-SAW-rus ah-PAT-uh-sawr-us ah-PAT-o-sore-us

ah-PAT-uh-SAWR-us

ahr-kee-OP-ter-iks

<u>Archaeopteryx</u> AR-kee-OP-ter-ricks ar-kee-OP-ter-ix

<u>Argentinosaurus</u> ahr-jen-TEEN-uh-SAWR-us

<u>Dacentrurus</u> day-sen-TROO-rus <u>Bagaceratops</u>

bah-gah-SAIR-uh-tops <u>Deinocheirus</u> DIE-nuh-KIE-rus

<u>Barapasaurus</u> bah-RAH-puh-sawr-us

<u>Deinonychus</u> dye-NONN-ee-kus <u>Barosaurus</u> BAIR-uh-SAWR-us dyne-ON-ik-us die-non-ee-kus

**BAH-ree-ON-iks BAIR-ee-ON-iks** <u>Dicraeosaurus</u> dye-CREE-uh-sawr-us

<u>Brachiosaurus</u>

<u>Baryonyx</u>

BRA-ki-o-SO-rus brack-ee-oh-SAW-russ brak-ee-o-SAWR-us BRAK-ee-oh-SAW-rus BRAK-ee-uh-sawr-us bray-kee-uh-SAWR-us

BRAK-ee-uh-SAWR-us BRAKE-ee-oh-SORE-us <u>Dimorphodon</u>

dye-MORF-oh-don **Brachyceratops** <u>Diplodocus</u> brak-ee-SAIR-uh-tops

dip-LOD-o-cus dip-LAH-duh-cuss <u>Brontosaurus</u> di-PLOD-oke-us **BRON-toe-SAWR-us\* DIP-lo-DOE-kus** BRON-to-SO-rus dih-PLOD-uh-kus bront-o-SAWR-us

dip-LAH-doh-cus **BRON-toe-SAWR-us\* BRON-toe-SAW-rus** di-PLOD-uh-kus\* bron-tuh-SAWR-us di-PLOD-uh-kus\* dye-PLOD-uh-kus BRON-toe-sore-us

<u>Camarasaurus</u> <u>Dromaeosaurus</u> KAM-uh-ruh-sawr-us DROM-ee-uh-SAW-rus <u>Camptosaurus</u>

drom-ee-uh-SAWR-us DROH-mee-uh-SAWR-us

<u>Dromiceiomimus</u> dro-miss-ee-o-MY-mus

DRY-o-sawr-us

KAMP-tuh-sawr-us <u>Dryosaurus</u> **DRY-oh-SAW-rus** 

<u>Carcharodontosaurus</u> kahr-KAHR-uh-DON-tuh-SAWR-us

<u>Centrosaurus</u> SEN-truh-sawr-us

kaw-DIP-ter-iks

<u>Carnotaurus</u>

<u>Caudipteryx</u>

kahr-nuh-TAWR-us

ser-RAT-oh-SAW-rus sair-AT-o-sawr-us

<u>Elaphrosaurus</u> el-AFF-row-SAW-rus SEE-tee-oh-SAW-rus eh-LOFF-ruh-sawr-us SEET-ee-o-sawr-us

> <u>Elasmosaurus</u> el-AZ-mo-sore-us

KAZ-muh-SAWR-us **Eoceratops** EE-o-sair-uh-tops **Coelophysis** 

> **Eoraptor** EE-oh-RAP-tor

co-el-off-ee-sis <u>Euhelopus</u>

> **Euoplocephalus** you-OP-loe-KEFF-a-lus you-op-luh-SEF-uh-lus YOU-oh-plo-SEF-ah-lus

<u>Erlikosaurus</u>

er-LIK-uh-sawr-us

vou-heh-LO-pus

**Dryptosaurus** 

<u>Edmontonia</u>

**DRIP-tuh-sawr-us** 

ed-mon-TO-ne-ah

ed-MON-tuh-sawr-us

eye-nee-oh-SAWR-us

**Edmontosaurus** 

<u>Einiosaurus</u>

YOO-oh-plo-SEF-uh-lus you-o-plo-seff-a-lus you-oh-ploh-sef-al-us YOU-oh-plo-SEFF-ah-lus

> <u>Fabrosaurus</u> FAB-ruh-sawr-us FAB-roh-SAWR-us

> > gall-ih-MY-mus

<u>Fruitadens</u> <u>Corythosaurus</u> FROO-ta-denz kor-ITH-oh-SAWR-us KOR-ith-o-SAWR-us <u>Gallimimus</u> ko-RITH-uh-sawr-us

co-RITH-oh-SAWR-us <u>Geranosaurus</u> jer-AN-uh-sawr-us

SIM-bus-POND-ee-lus

<u>Giganotosaurus</u> JIG-uh-NOT-uh-SAWR-us JY-gah-NOH-toe-SORE-us

> <u>Gongubusaurus</u> GONG-you-bus-SAW-rus

**Goniopholis** 

**GONE-ee-oh-FOE-les** 

<u>Gravitholus</u>

**Hadrosaurus HAD-ro-SAWR-us** HAD-row-SAW-rus

**GRA-vith-OH-lus** 

HAD-ruh-sawr-us HAD-roh-SAWR-us HAD-ruh-SAWR-us

<u>Herrerasaurus</u> her-RAY-rah-sawr-us

<u>Heterodontosaurus</u> het-er-uh-DON-tuh-sawr-us

<u>Homalocephale</u> ho-mah-luh-SEF-uh-lee

<u>Hydrotherosaurus</u> HIGH-droh-THER-oh-SORE-US

<u>Hylaeosaurus</u> hy-LAY-ee-uh-sawr-us

<u>Hypselosaurus</u> HIP-sih-luh-sawr-us

<u>Hypsilophodon</u> HIP-sill-oh-foe-DON hip-sih-LO-fu-don

<u>Ichthyosaurus</u> IK-thi-o-SO-rus ik-thee-o-SAWR-us

IK-thee-oh-SAW-rus

**Monoclonius** MON-oh-KLON-e-us mon-o-KLONE-e-us **MON-oh-KLONE-ee-us** mon-uh-CLO-nee-us

MIS-oh-SAW-rus

<u>Microraptor</u>

MY-kro-RAP-tor

<u>Microvenator</u>

<u>Mixosaurus</u>

MY-croh-RAP-tore

my-kro-ven-AY-tor

<u>Muttaburrasaurus</u> mut-tah-BUR-rah-sawr-us

**Nemegtosaurus** 

<u>Nothosaurus</u>

NO-tho-SAW-rus

NOTH-roh-NYE-kus

ome-DEN-oh-SAW-rus

<u>Opisthocoelicaudia</u>

orn-i-tho-LESS-teez

or-nith-oh-LESS-teez

or-nith-o-LESS-teez\*

or-nith-o-LESS-teez\*

or-nith-oh-MY-muss

**OR-nith-oh-MEE-mus** 

or-nith-uh-MY-mus

oth-NEEL-ee-ah

<u>Ornithomimus</u>

<u>Othnielia</u>

o-piss-tho-SEE-luh-caw

<u>Ohmdenosaurus</u>

dee-uh

**Ornitholestes** 

**Nothronychus** 

NEH-meh-tuh-sawr-us

i-GWAN-o-don ih-GWAN-oh-don ee-GWON-oh-don ig-WAN-oh-don

i-GWA-nuh-don **Nodosaurus** no-doe-SAWR-us NODE-oh-SAWR-us\* ig-WAN-oh-DON\*\* ig-WAN-oh-DON\*\* NODE-oh-SAWR-us\* ih-GWAH-nuh-don

ig-WAHN-oh-don <u>Ingenia</u>

<u>Janenschia</u> yah-NEN-chee-ah

in-JEN-ee-ah

<u>Iguanodon</u>

ig-WAN-o-don\*

<u>Jinfengopteryx</u> jin-feng-op-ter-ix

<u>Kentrosaurus</u> **KENT-o-SAWR-us KEN-truh-sawr-us KEN-tro-saw-rus** KEN-troh-SAWR-us **KEN-truh-SAWR-us** 

**KEN-troh-SORE-us** 

<u>Kritosaurus</u> KRIT-uh-sawr-us

lab-o-KAY-nee-uh

<u>Laeallynasaura</u> lee-ell-in-oh-saw-ra <u>Lambeosaurus</u>

LAM-bee-o-SAWR-us LAM-be-uh-sawr-us LAM-bee-oh-SORE-us

<u>Leptoceratops</u>

LEP-to-SEH-ruh-tops <u>Lesothosaurus</u>

leh-SOTH-uh-sawr-us <u>Lexovisaurus</u> pak-ih-SEF-uh-luh-SAWR-us

lex-OH-vuh-sawr-us <u>Lufengosaurus</u>

loo-FEN-guh-sawr-us <u>Lystrosaurus</u>

LIE-stro-SAW-rus <u>Macroplata</u>

mack-roh-PLAH-tah **Maiasaura** mah-ee-ah-SAWR-uh

my-uh-SAWR-uh MY-uh-SAWR-uh **Mamenchisaurus** 

ma-MEN-che-SAW-rus <u>Pelorosaurus</u> mah-MEN-chee-sawr-us pe-LOR-oh-SAW-rus mah-MEN-chih-SAWR-us

<u>Pentaceratops</u> <u>Massopondylus</u> pen-tuh-SARE-ah-tops mass-o-SPON-dih-lus PEN-tah-SAIR-uh-tops

<u>Megalosaurus</u> meg-a-lo-SAWR-us

pin-AH-kuh-sawr-us MEG-a-low-SAW-rus <u>Plateosaurus</u> <u>Melanorosaurus</u>

PLATE-ee-o-SAWR-us PLAT-ee-oh-SAW-rus mel-AN-or-uh-sawr-us PLAY-tee-uh-sawr-us PLAT-ee-uh-SAWR-us **Metriacanthosaurus** MET-tree-a-CAN-tho-SAW-<u>Plesiosaurus</u>

PLE-si-o-SO-rus PLEE-see-oh-SAW-rus <u>Microceratops</u> plee-zee-oh-SAWR-us my-kro-SAIR-uh-tops

> <u>Podokesaurus</u> po-DOE-kee-sawr-us <u>Polacanthus</u>

> > pole-a-KAN-thus POL-a-KAN-thus <u>Prosaurolophus</u> pro-sawr-OL-uh-fus

pro-toe-SAIR-uh-tops

**Protoceratops** pro-toe-SER-a-tops PRO-toe-SERR-a-tops pro-toe-SARE-a-tops PRO-to-SAIR-uh-tops

<u>Pteranodon</u> ter-AN-o-don

SIT-uh-ko-sawr-us

<u>Psittacosaurus</u>

te-RAN-o-don ter-ANN-oh-don tare-AN-o-don

> <u>Pterodactylus</u> TERR-oh-DACK-til-us ter-oh-DAK-til

<u>Quetzalcoatlus</u> KET-sal-koh-AT-lus KET-zal-coh-AT-lus

Ramphorhynchus **RAM-foe-RINK-us** 

RAM-foh-RING-kus <u>Riojasaurus</u> ree-OH-ha-SAWR-us

<u>Saichania</u> sye-CHAY-nee-ah

ree-oh-ja-saw-rus

<u>Saltasaurus</u> SAHL-tuh-SAWR-us

<u>Saurolophus</u> saw-ROL-oh-fus sawr-OL-o-fus

sawr-uh-PLY-teez

skel-LY-doh-SAW-rus

SKOLE-o-SAWR-us

SEE-gih-sawr-us

shan-TUNG-o-sawr-us

SALT-o-pus

<u>Sauroplites</u>

<u>Scelidosaurus</u>

<u>Scolosaurus</u>

<u>Segisaurus</u>

<u>Ouranosaurus</u> oo-RAN-oh-SAW-rus our-AHN-uh-sawr-us oo-RAHN-oh-SAWR-us oo-RAHN-oh-SORE-us

**Oviraptor** o-vee-RAP-tor

<u>Pachycephalosaurus</u> PAK-ee-SEF-a-lo-SAWR-us pak-ee-SEF-uh-lo-sawr-us PAK-ee-SEF-ah-loh-SAW-rus

<u>Panoplosaurus</u>

<u>Parasaurolophus</u>

<u>Pinacosaurus</u>

<u>Shanshanosaurus</u> shan-SHAN-uh-sawr-us <u>Pachyrhinosaurus</u> <u>Shantungosaurus</u> PAK-ee-rye-no-sawr-us

<u>Palaeoscincus</u> pay-lee-o-SKINK-us <u>Shunosaurus</u> SHOO-nuh-SAWR-us

pan-OP-luh-sawr-us <u>Sinocoelurus</u> SIGN-oh-koe-LEW-rus par-a-sawr-OL-o-fus

<u>Spinosaurus</u> PAR-a-saw-ROW-low-fus SPY-nuh-sawr-us par-ah-sawr-OL-uh-fus SPY-no-saw-rus PAR-ah-sawr-OL-oh-fus SPINE-oh-SAWR-us PAIR-uh-saw-RAWL-uh-fus SPY-nuh-SAWR-us PAR-ah-saw-RAH-luh-fus

SPINE-oh-SORE-us <u>Staurikosaurus</u>

stor-IK-uh-sawr-us <u>Stegoceras</u> steg-GOSS-er-rus steg-OSS-er-us

<u>Stegosaurus</u> STEG-oh-SAWR-us steg-uh-SAW-russ steg-o-SAWR-us STEG-o-SAWR-us STEG-oh-SAW-rus

STEG-uh-sawr-us steg-uh-SAWR-us steg-oh-SAW-rus STEG-o-sore-us steg-oh-SAWR-us STEG-uh-SAWR-us

<u>Stenonychosaurus</u>

sten-ON-ik-uh-sawr-us ste-NON-ik-oh-SAWR-us **Struthiomimus** 

STROO-thi-o-MI-mus strooth-ee-uh-MY-mus STROOTH-ee-uh-MY-mus <u>Styracosaurus</u>

sty-rack-o-SAWR-us sty-RACK-oh-SAW-rus sty-RAK-uh-sawr-us stih-RAK-uh-SAWR-us sty-RAK-o-SAWR-us

<u>Supersaurus</u> soup-er-SAWR-us

<u>Syntarsus</u> sin-TAR-sus

<u>Teinurosaurus</u> TIE-new-row-SAW-rus

<u>Teratosaurus</u>

tare-at-oh-SAW-russ ther-AT-uh-sawr-us <u>Therizinosaurus</u>

THAIR-uh-ZEEN-uh-SAWR-us

<u>Trachodon</u> TRACK-oh-don

TRAK-o-don

<u>Triceratops</u>

try-SER-a-tops\* tri-SER-a-tops try-SER-a-tops\* try-SERR-a-tops try-SAIR-uh-tops\*\*

try-SER-uh-tops try-SARE-ah-TOPS try-SAIR-uh-tops\*\* try-SARE-a-tops

<u>Troodon</u>

TRO-uh-don

try-SAIR-uh-tops\*\*

try-SAIR-uh-tops\*\*

**Basic Breakdown** <u>Tsintaosaurus</u> tsin-TAY-o-SAWR-us chin-TAY-o-sawr-us

<u>Tuojiangosaurus</u> TWO-oh-JANG-oh-SAW-rus

<u>Tyrannosaurus rex</u> tie-RAN-oh-SAWR-us ti-RAN-o-SO-rus

tih-ran-uh-SAW-russ tye-ran-o-SAWR-us REX tie-RAN-o-SAWR-us tie-RAN-oh-SAW-rus recks tye-RAN-uh-sawr-us tie-ran-uh-SAWR-us ty-ran-oh-SAW-rus rex

tih-RAN-o-sore-us-rex tih-RAN-uh-SAWR-us reks <u>Ultrasaurus</u> ull-tra-SAWR-us

tie-ran-uh-SAW-rus rex

ul-tra-SAWR-us **UL-trah-SAWR-us** <u>Utahraptor</u>

**YOO-tah-RAPT-tor** YOO-tah-RAP-tore

<u>Velociraptor</u> veh-loss-ih-RAP-tor va-LOSS-ah-RAP-tor veh-LOSS-ih-RAP-tor veh-LOS-ih-RAP-tore

<u>Wannanosaurus</u> wah-NAN-oh-SAWR-us

<u>Wuerhosaurus</u> woo-EHR-hoh-SORE-us

<u>Xenotarsosaurus</u>

<u>Xenoposeidon</u> zen-OH-poh-SYE-don

zeen-oh-TAR-soh-SAWR-us <u>Yangchuanosaurus</u> YANG-chew-AN-oh-SAW-

YAHNG-chwahn-oh-SORE-

YING-shan-oh-SAWR-us

**Zephyrosaurus** ZEF-ih-roh-SAWR-us

<u>Zigongosaurus</u>

<u>Yingshanosaurus</u>

ze-GONG-oh-SAW-rus <u>Zuniceratops</u>

ZOO-nee-SAIR-uh-tops

THE PLAN I collated all the dinosaur name pronunciations from all the children's books that I own in order to find out if they are consistent with each other, and to see what other tendencies may be observed about them.

**HOW THIS POSTER WORKS** 

AL-uh-SAWR-us, not AL-a-SÔR-as.

On the left half of this poster is a list of all the dinosaur name pronunciations I found in seventeen children's books. A list of the books may be found below.

The color of each pronunciation matches the color of its source book. The books (and the list of pronunciations under each name) are arranged chronologically.

Asterisks and double asterisks denote pronunciations that are exactly the same.

**FINDINGS** 

**Transcription Formats** Interestingly, most of the books use the same format to signify syllable breaks and accents. For syllable breaks, they use a hyphen, and for accents, they put the accented syllable(s) in capital letters rather than use an accent mark. For example, **SEE-lo-FIE-sis**. None of the books use phonetic symbols. Instead, they write each syllable as if they are being sounded out. For instance, they would write

These conventions were likely chosen because children would find them more intuitive and recognizable than standard dictionary diacritics. A few books use other methods, including interpuncts (raised dots) and spaces for syllable breaks, and italics instead of capitals. I changed all the pronunciations from those books into the same hyphencapital letter format as the rest to make it easier to focus on the pronunciations themselves.

SOURCES/KEY

The seventeen books found in the key provide a sample of 173 dinosaur names and a total of 385 pronunciations of those names. Only 24 of these pronunciations are an exact match with another book's pronunciation.

104 names are represented by only 1 pronunciation, 25 names have two pronunciations each, 15 names have 3 pronunciations each, 9 names have 4 pronunciations each, 6 names have 5 pronunciations each, 4 names have 6 pronunciations each (Coelophysis, Compsognathus, Kentrosaurus, and Parasaurolophus), 2 names have 7 pronunciations each (Brontosaurus and Euoplocephalus), 2 names have 8 pronunciations each (Allosaurus and Ankylosaurus), 2 names have 9 pronunciations each (Brachiosaurus and Diplodocus), 1 name has 11 pronunciations (Iguanodon), 2 names have 12 pronunciations each (Stegosaurus and Tyrannosaurus), and 1 name has 13 pronunciations (Tricer-

Every time a name has more than one pronunciation, at least one of the pronunciations differs from the rest; in most cases they are all different from each other. None of the names' pronunciations are universally agreed-upon. The pronunciations with the highest degree of agreement are probably Chasmosaurus, Dimetrodon, and Trachodon.

Some of the dinosaur names with the greatest variation in their pronunciations (outside of small differences in transcription--see Reasons for Pronunciation Differences,

Dinosaur Time, Peggy Parish, HarperCollins: New York, 1974.

Dinosaur Hunters, Kate McMullan, Random House: New York, 1989.

Dinosaurs, Dinosaurs, Byron Barton, HarperCollins: New York, 1989.

, Gail Gibbons, Scholastic: New York, 1993.

In the Days of the Dinosaurs, Roy Chapman Andrews, Random House: New York, 1959.

Dinosaurs! A Drawing Book, Michael Emberley, Little, Brown, & Company: Boston, 1980.

A First Look at Dinosaurs, Millicent E. Selsam and Joyce Hunt, Scholastic: New York, 1982.

Colossal Book of Dinosaurs, Michael Teitelbaum, Modern Publishing: New York, 1989.

Big Rex and Friends, Roger Priddy, Priddy Books,/St. Martin's Press: New York, 2004.

Barnum Brown: Dinosaur Hunter, David Sheldon, Walker & Company: New York, 2006.

Dinosaur A-Z, Simon Mugford, Priddy Books/St. Martin's Press: New York, 2004.

King of the Dinosaurs: Tyrannosaurus rex, Michael Berenstain, A Golden Book: New York, 1989.

s, Glenn O. Blough, Whittlesey House (McGraw-Hill): New York, 1960.

Dinosaurs of the Land, Sea, and Air, Sheleigah Grube and Michael Teitelbaum, Modern Publishing: New York, 1988.

Encyclopedia Prehistorica: Dinosaurs, Robert Sabuda and Matthew Reinhart, Candlewick Press: Cambridge, MA, 2005.

Why Why Did Dinosaurs Lay Eggs?, Camilla de la Bedoyere, Miles Kelly Publishing, Bardfield Centre, England, 2005.

Alphasaurus and other Prehistoric Types, Sharon Werner and Sarah Forss, Blue Apple Books: Maplewood, NJ, 2012.

below) include Ankylosaurus, Brachiosaurus, Compsognathus, Diplodocus, Elaphrosaurus, Giganotosaurus, Parasaurolophus, and Plateosaurus. Their syllables are broken up and pronounced significantly differently, depending on the source.

**Reasons for Pronunciation Differences** 

As noted, the vast majority of the pronunciations do not agree with each other. Much of this is due to differences in the transcription--how the authors decided to try to communicate the sounds of each syllable. Other differences are truly dissimilar takes on syllable breaks and sounds. There are a number of reasons behind these differences.

Dinosaur names are derived from multiple languages and word sources, including Latin, Greek, Chinese, people's first and last names, and place names, many of which are obscure to the everyday American reader. These source words are sometimes manipulated in order to aurally fit with whatever suffix (-saurus, -odon, etc.) they are paired with. When the different parts are put together, the mix is naturally confusing, since each language may pronounce the same letters in different ways. One example is Tsintaosaurus, in which the Chinese first syllable is transcribed here as both tsin and chin. Another example is Riojasaurus. One book pronounces the "j" as a ja sound, the other as a **ha** sound more in keeping with the name's Spanish origin. There is also sometimes a difference between the way Latin was originally pronounced and the way it is pronounced in American English today, making for even more confusion. Each language also has its own rhythmic pattern for accents and syllable breaks.

Also, since many dinosaurs are rare and don't come up in everyday conversation, people often only encounter their names in written form, leading them to come up with their own pronunciations in their heads.

Further, there are various regional and international accents even for English, leading to differences in the demarcation of syllables and accents, in the pronunciation of vowels as long, short, or schwas, etc. For example, the first syllable of Tyrannosaurus, one of the most popular dinosaurs and thus a name that one would think would be pronounced fairly consistently, is split here between the long

vowel sound of **tie** and the short vowel sound of **tih**.

It is also fascinating how many variations there are on the basic -saurus ending: so-rus, sawr-us, saw-rus, sore-us, saw-russ. One book actually uses both so-rus and saw-rus on different occasions! Some of these are based on slight pronunciation differences, while others are due to the transcription method.

When it comes to transcription, each book has its own favorite way to communicate a sound in writing--to vs toe vs toh vs tow, for example, each of which has its own dangers of mispronunciation. For instance, the first could easily be read as rhyming with the word "too," and the last could possibly rhyme with "how."

other books share this kind of inconsistency. Discovering

Somewhat surprisingly, some of the books transcribe the same sounds inconsistently from name to name. For instance, Dinosaur A-Z transcribes its syllables featuring the O sound as oh, low, plo, roh, troh, to, koh, and soh. Most of them use an"h" to emphasize the stressed long vowel sound, but why not use loh, ploh, and toh? Several

Dinosaurs uses a plain "i" to represent different sounds in several places: for instance it uses ki for the sound kee in Brachiosaurus, but uses fi to represent fie in Coelophysis.

The phonetic transcriptions were probably also informed by the reading level of the target audience. Very young children would need very simple, perhaps phonics-based, pronunciations. Older children would be able to deal with more complex letter combinations, but still probably

wouldn't know dictionary-style pronunciation symbols.

ferent ways (rex, reks, recks).

**Further Points of Interest** Interestingly, no two pronunciations of the popular names Stegosaurus and Tyrannosaurus are exactly the same, but the most popular name, Triceratops, has two pairs of pronunciations that together make up 6 of its 13 pronunciations. Tyrannosaurus is also interesting because it is listed with its species, rex, half the time, while half the time it is absent--and even the simple rex is transcribed three dif-

Clearly, consistent pronunciations are not a priority in all children's publications. Why Why Why Did Dinosaurs Lay Eggs, a British book, provides some unusual pronunciations (for instance, see its Coelophysis) that may be based on its national accent. But it also provides two different pronunciations for Euoplocephalus, mere inches apart on the same page: you-o-plo-seff-a-lus and you-oh-plohsef-al-us. They are different partly because of the transcription--the second example adds an "h" to the "o" sound and uses only one "f"--but they also break the final syllable differently.

Dinosaurs of the Land. Sea. and Air and Colossal Book of Dinosaurs seem like a two-part series in many ways. They both have the same overall visual format and feature lengthy "dinosaur dictionaries" with pronunciation guides in the back. They share the same author and were printed by the same publisher a year apart. However, their pronunciations do not match. They have different conventions for the **-saurus** suffix and vowel sounds: generally *Land*, Sea, and Air fully voices the vowels while Colossal makes them schwas. For example, note the third syllable and the ending in their respective pronunciations for Albertosaurus: al-BUR-toe-SAW-rus and al-BER-tuh-sawr-us. They also sometimes break the syllables differently, as seen in their pronunciations for Diplodocus: DIP-lo-DOE-kus and dih-PLOD-uh-kus.

As an positive example in the opposite direction, the two books with the highest number of shared pronunciations are the very simplistic toddler cloth book Big Rex and Friends and the more sophisticated Dinosaur A-Z for older children. Seemingly totally different in mission and style, these books are actually by the same publisher and were printed in the same year. Apparently it was important to them to make sure that their pronunciations (including such relatively obscure dinosaurs as *Nodosaurus*) were consistent from one book to another, even if the same children would be unlikely to read both books. (They do

A First Look at Dinosaurs and In the Days of the Dinosaurs pronounce two names exactly the same, and have several others that are very similar. They have the approach on -saurus and vowel stresses, which brings them fairly close in their basic pronunciation philosophy--closer than most

of the other books--although they differ on a few names.

**SUMMATION** 

differ slightly on *Triceratops*.)

In general, the dinosaur names are pronounced differently from book to book, and indeed sometimes even within the same book. Many of these differences are really differences in transcription, however. If the transcriptions--which are at least partly an artifact of adults trying to figure out how to communicate sounds to children who are unaware of official phonetic symbols--were made consistent, then many more pronunciations would be the same. Further, if vowel stresses were made consistent--since vowel stresses are to a degree a matter of regional accents--the pronunciations would be even more similar.

The main differences that would survive would be in syllable breaks and accents, which are true variances. Even then, much of the variance is in the details. For example, when it comes to the beginning of Iguanodon, is the "g" sound part of the first or second syllable? This splitting of sounds can be very much like splitting hairs. Overall though, even these small differences make it clear that there is no objective set of pronunciations for these names--or at least they have not been communicated to the world of children's books.

It is interesting that none of my adult books had pronunciation guides. Perhaps pronunciations are considered to be too basic for the adult level, although clearly if the pronunciations are not communicated consistently to children, then adult readers won't be any better off. My next project in this vein will be to compile internet pronunciations, including some sites targeted towards adults, and compare

them with the pronunciations in this poster.

NOTES ON THE PROCESS

kamp-to-SO-rus

**KAMP-toe-SAW-rus** 

tions in children's books, which would be nearly impossible to compile comprehensively. It is just a sample. I restricted this sample to children's books for two reasons.

standard dictionaries like Webster's) include pronunciations. Certainly there are some adult pronunciation guides out there, but they are rare and exceptions to the rule.

I could have included online pronunciations, which are available on several comprehensive websites, and which are sometimes targeted at adults. However, I decided to keep those pronunciations separate, and will deal with

them in a follow-up survey. By sticking with children's books, I kept the pool more unified and comparable.

levels in mind, and are often written by nonspecialists for

nonspecialists. There is also often a sense that kids are interested in dinosaurs for their entertainment value, not their scientific value, and so there may be less interest or care in things like pronunciations.

I limited myself to children's books that I had on hand instead of searching out others simply to put a limit on how many I would include; otherwise the sample would be

almost infinite. These books provide a large enough random sample to show the variance in the names without going to pointless extravagances of effort. It should be noted that many children's books do not offer pronunciations; these 17 books are perhaps only a tenth of the total pool of books I looked through. By coincidence, the books provide a nice chronological range from 1959 through 2012 (with a curious grouping of 3 books from 1989!).

Many of the names included here have only one pronunciation and thus do not really show a range of pronunciations. They do, however, provide further examples of the authors' overall philosophy on syllable breaks, vowel sounds, the pronunciation of various letter groupings based on their origin languages, etc. I also listed them because it's interesting to see what dinosaurs are included in children's books at all (Opisthocoelicaudia, anyone?).

No attempt has been made to update old names like Brontosaurus, which are included here just as they are printed in the books. Animals that were not actually dinosaurs, but which the general public usually thinks of as dinosaurs, such as *Plesiosaurus*, *Dimetrodon*, and *Pteranodon*, are also included here just as they are in the books.

This selection is obviously not a collection of all dinosaur name pronunciations, or even all dinosaur name pronuncia-

First, out of the many scores of dinosaur books for children and adults that I own, only the children's books (other than

This leads to the second reason, which is that children's books have their own characteristics as a genre and it is worth exploring them on their own. For example, children's books are often written with very specific reading age