252 million – 66 million years ago

Put the Events in Order

Name _____ Date _____

These 10 events from the Dinosaurs timeline are out of order. Write a number from 1 to 10 in each box, from the earliest event (1) to the latest (10).

☐ **The Bone Wars**

American paleontologists Othniel Charles Marsh and Edward Drinker Cope wage a bitter rival fossil-hunting competition across the American West, discovering over 100 new dinosaur species between them — including Stegosaurus, Allosaurus, Diplodocus, and Triceratops.

☐ **Jurassic Period — Age of Giants**

The Jurassic period produces the largest animals ever to walk the Earth — sauropods like Brachiosaurus and Diplodocus stretch over 80 feet and weigh more than 50 tons; Allosaurus is the dominant apex predator.

☐ **Richard Owen Names the Dinosaurs**

British scientist Richard Owen studies fossil bones and recognizes that some ancient reptiles were fundamentally different from anything alive today — he coins the term 'Dinosauria' (from the Greek for 'terrible lizard') to describe them.

☐ **Asteroid Impact Theory Proposed and Confirmed**

Luis and Walter Alvarez publish evidence that the non-avian dinosaur extinction was caused by an asteroid impact — identifying a worldwide layer of iridium (rare on Earth but common in asteroids) at the exact geological boundary where dinosaurs disappear from the fossil record.

☐ **End-Triassic Extinction Opens the Door**

A mass extinction at the end of the Triassic period kills most large land reptiles and many marine animals — leaving dinosaurs as the dominant large land vertebrates on Earth.

Cretaceous Peak — T. rex and Triceratops

The late Cretaceous produces the most famous dinosaurs — Tyrannosaurus rex (the most powerful land predator ever), Triceratops, Ankylosaurus, and the long-necked titanosaurs; flowering plants spread across the world alongside new species of insects and mammals.

The Great Dying — Permian Mass Extinction

The largest mass extinction in Earth's history kills an estimated 90–96% of all species on Earth — most marine life, most plants, and most land animals — in what scientists call the Great Dying.

First Dinosaurs Appear

The first true dinosaurs appear in the Triassic period — small, upright-walking reptiles with a posture more like a bird or mammal than a sprawling lizard, giving them a significant advantage in speed and endurance.

First Birds Evolve

Archaeopteryx — a creature with both dinosaur features (teeth, clawed wings, long bony tail) and bird features (feathers, wishbone) — appears in the fossil record, marking the origin of birds from small feathered theropod dinosaurs.

Chicxulub Asteroid Impact — Mass Extinction

An asteroid roughly 6 miles (10 km) wide strikes what is now the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico at 40,000 mph, triggering planet-wide wildfires, a 'nuclear winter' that blocks the Sun for years, and the collapse of food chains — killing all non-avian dinosaurs and 75% of all species.

252 million – 66 million years ago

Put the Events in Order: Answer Key

252 million years ago	1.	The Great Dying — Permian Mass Extinction
245–230 million years ago	2.	First Dinosaurs Appear
200 million years ago	3.	End-Triassic Extinction Opens the Door
201–145 million years ago	4.	Jurassic Period — Age of Giants
c. 150 million years ago	5.	First Birds Evolve
68–66 million years ago	6.	Cretaceous Peak — T. rex and Triceratops
66 million years ago	7.	Chicxulub Asteroid Impact — Mass Extinction
1842	8.	Richard Owen Names the Dinosaurs
1877–1892	9.	The Bone Wars
1980–91	10.	Asteroid Impact Theory Proposed and Confirmed