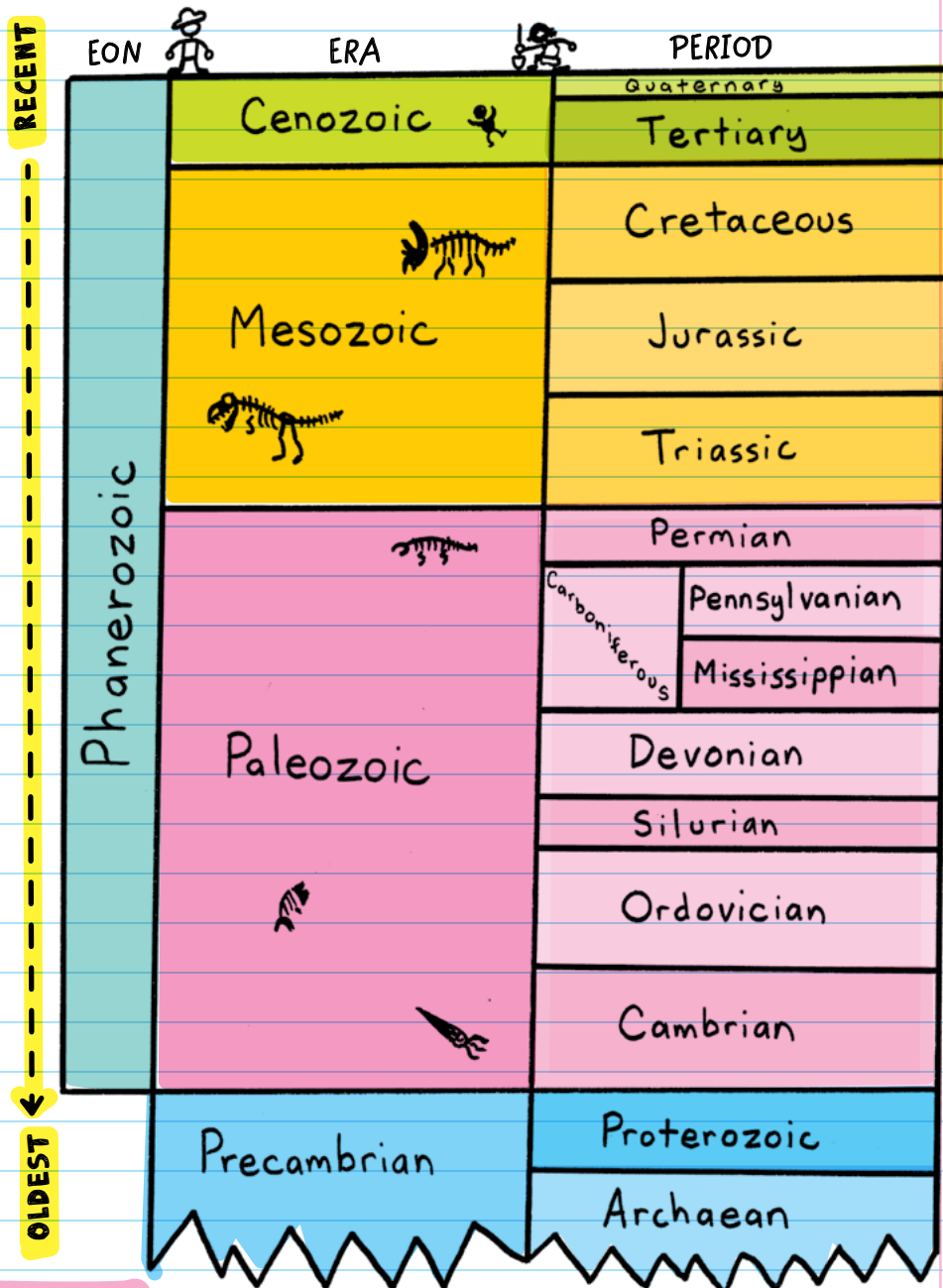


GEOLOGIC TIME SCALE



The geologic time scale is based on the appearance and disappearance of life-forms. Life-forms appear and disappear as they evolve and/or become extinct due to factors like environmental changes. Organisms compete with one another for resources, and individuals most suited to the environment survive, as explained by Darwin's theory of natural selection. Species that are no longer fit for their environment must either move or adapt, or go extinct.

OVER 99% OF ALL SPECIES THAT HAVE LIVED ON EARTH ARE NOW EXTINCT!



Here's a mnemonic to remember the order of the eras:



Purple Pandas Make Crepes.

(Precambrian, Paleozoic, Mesozoic, Cenozoic)

EVOLUTION of the EARTH

Earth has not always looked the way it does today. Plate tectonics and water levels have continually changed the earth's appearance. Before the Mesozoic era, much of Earth was covered in water. By the end of the Paleozoic era, sea levels dropped and the continents were squeezed together into a huge landmass named Pangaea. Pangaea began spreading and separating into the continents we know today by the middle of the Mesozoic era. The continents are still moving today.

THE PRECAMBRIAN ERA COVERS MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF EARTH'S HISTORY. (NOT MUCH HAPPENED WITH LIVING THINGS IN THE FIRST 4 BILLION YEARS!)