

SCAT AND SKULLS

MATERIALS: **ANIMAL SKULLS**
ANIMAL PICTURES (to match skulls)
ANIMAL SCAT (to match skulls)

GOALS: 1) To know the differences between herbivores, omnivores and carnivores.
2) To know the relationship between dentition (teeth) and diet.

HERBIVORES, OMNIVORES AND CARNIVORES

HERBIVORES eat only food from plants; eg. grass, leaves, berries, fruit.
Deer, beaver (a rodent) and jack rabbit are all herbivores. (also squirrel)

OMNIVORES eat both plants and animals; eg. berries, leaves, mice, rabbits.
Bear, coyote, and raccoon are all omnivores. (also skunk, gray fox and opossum - a marsupial)

CARNIVORES eat only other creatures. They are meat eaters, eg rabbits, mice, fish
Mountain lion, bobcat and river otter are all carnivores.

PROGRAM (9 skulls; see italicized mammals above)
Start with 3 skulls and add the others as you learn them.
Keep them in groups of 3 - (Deer, Bear, Mountain Lion)
(Beaver, Coyote, Bobcat) and (Jack Rabbit, Raccoon, River Otter)

Small Group: Have group stand around the table. Give everyone an animal picture card and have them place it next to the skull they think is their animal. If someone is unsure, talk them through an elimination process by asking leading questions. Try not to tell them the answer.

Once all skulls are identified discuss the teeth and type of food eaten by the different sets of teeth.. Help them decide which are herbivores, carnivores and omnivores. Also, have them identify a food that their creature might eat in the wild.

Teeth are very important when eating. Large canine teeth and sharp molars are usually meat-eaters. Sharp incisors for biting off leaves etc and flatter molars for chewing or grinding are signs of plant eaters.

Adaptations: *Predators* usually have eyes in the front of their face to focus on their prey. *Prey* have eyes on the sides of their face to give them a wider range of vision.

SOME OF THE FOODS THESE ANIMALS EAT:

DEER are browsers. They eat leaves, grass, flowers, fruit.

JACK RABBITS eat grass, shrubs, flowering plants.

BEAVERS eat the thin soft bark of young trees such as willow, maple, and cottonwood; also the cambium layer of trees (the soft wood that is inside the bark); also roots, buds, and water plants.

BEARS eat grasses, roots, berries, insects, nuts, honey; also grubs, fish and small mammals.

COYOTES eat rabbits, mice, squirrels, gophers, lizards, insects, fruit and berries

RACCOONS eat insects, worms, eggs, squirrels, rats, acorns, berries, fruit, nuts and vegetables.

MOUNTAIN LIONS, also known as cougar, puma or panther, eat mostly deer; also coyotes, raccoons, and rodents.

BOBCATS eat mostly jack rabbits; also mice, rats, squirrels, birds, fish and insects.

RIVER OTTERS eat mostly fish; also crayfish, clams, insects, snails, frogs, turtles and rodents.