

How to Read a Skull Like an Open Book

Rangers in the Classroom—Pre-visit Lesson Plan



Grade Level: 5th

Setting: Classroom

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Standards Addressed:

Reading - Vocabulary and
Concept Development:
1.3,1.4

Introduction:

Welcome to Rangers in the Classroom! We are looking forward to visiting your class for our How to Read a Skull Like an Open Book program. To help prepare your class for the ranger visit, we have created a pre-visit activity to introduce your students to some of the concepts we will cover in our program. If you are interested in additional preparation, the program outline includes a vocabulary list and can easily be found on the website at:

<http://www.nps.gov/seki/forteachers/index.htm>. By exploring a few concepts and vocabulary words with your students prior to our visit, you will help us hit the ground running.

Have fun and we'll see you soon!

Materials:

- Document camera or projector
- Construction paper
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons

Instructions:

1. Introduce the vocabulary words **molars**, **canines**, and **incisors** to the class using the sheets provided and a projector.
2. Pass out mystery animal worksheets to students. There are three different sheets attached; each student should receive one of three mystery animals.
3. When students complete their mystery worksheet, they will design menus featuring three different meals that their mystery animal might eat. Use the sample menu as a guide.

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Molars



Molars sit in the back of the jaw. Compare the molars found in the top jaw to the molars found in the bottom jaw.

In the above skull, the molars are pointy and sharp. Sharp, pointy molars indicate that this animal eats meat. Sharp molars are used for shredding meat into smaller chunks.

In the skull below, the molars are more flat. Flat molars are a sign that this animal eats plants. Flat molars are used to grind up plants and seeds.

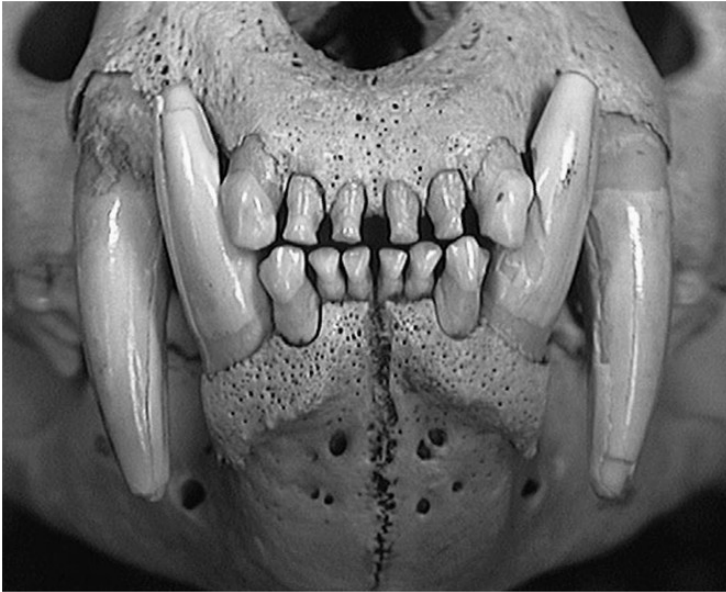


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Canines



The skull above features prominent canines. Canines are used to rip and tear meat. Large canines are often used to catch and hold prey.

The skull below came from an herbivore, a plant-eating animal. Do herbivores need large canines?



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Incisors



Incisors are used to cut plants. Which teeth do you use to bite an apple? The animal above relied on its incisors to eat. Was this animal an herbivore?

Carnivores, or meat-eating animals, have incisors, too. Carnivores use incisors to groom themselves.



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Mystery Animal 1



Are the molars flat or sharp? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Does the animal have canine teeth? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Does the animal have large incisors? What does that tell us about what it eats?

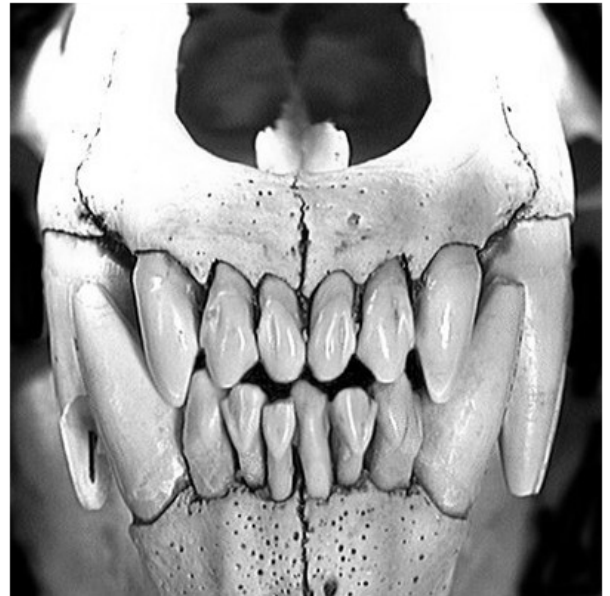
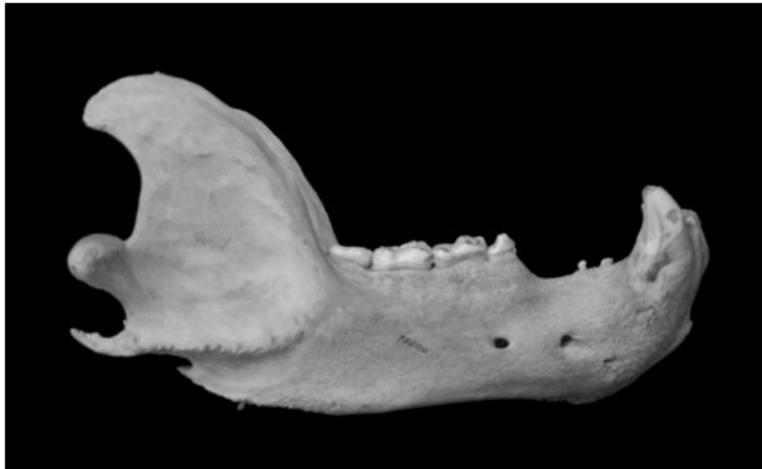
Based on what you have learned from these teeth, what kind of foods would this animal eat?

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Mystery Animal 2



Are the molars flat or sharp? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Does the animal have canine teeth? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Does the animal have large incisors? What does that tell us about what it eats?

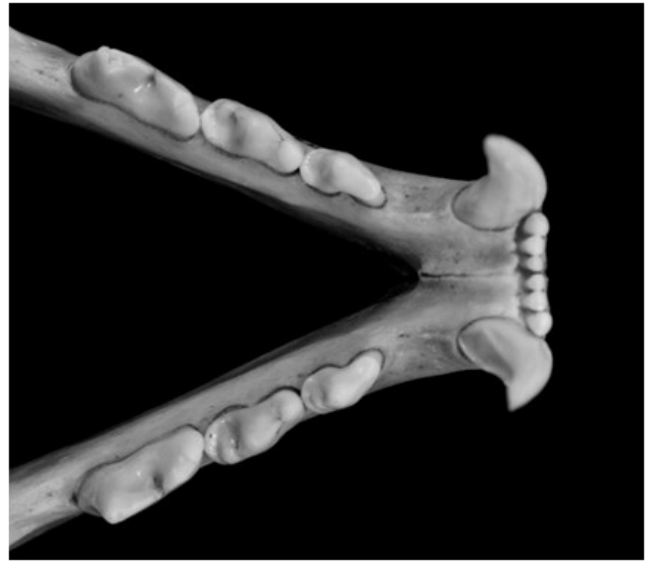
Based on what you have learned from these teeth, what kind of foods would this animal eat?

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Mystery Animal 3



Are the molars flat or sharp? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Does the animal have canine teeth? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Does the animal have large incisors? What does that tell us about what it eats?

Based on what you have learned from these teeth, what kind of foods would this animal eat?

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The Wildlife Cafe

Breakfast:

Fresh grass salad with a sprinkling of wild berries.
Comes with a side of leaves.



Lunch:

Fried nuts and berries served with a side of roasted wildflowers.



Dinner:

Wheat grass cake with your choice of either
wild strawberries or wild blackberries

