

## Lesson 3: What did dinosaurs eat?

**Introduction:** In this third lesson we will explore how we know what dinosaurs ate. We will explore the children's misconceptions about the past (for example dinosaurs didn't eat humans).

We will talk about fossils and dinosaur bones and link what dinosaurs ate, to what we eat now.

**Vocabulary page:** Here are the words you are going to use within the lesson.

Use 'My turn your turn' to introduce each word for example: Point to yourself and say "dinosaurs" and then point to your students for them to repeat "dinosaurs". Once the children have said this then explain the word to your students. (You can also use the flash cards provided and hold these up as you say the word).

**Dinosaur:** A special kind of animal that lived on land a long time ago.

**Extinct:** No longer alive we cannot see them in the world we live in.

**Teeth:** Bones used in mouth used for eating.

**Prehistoric:** A very long time ago.

**Bones:** Hard parts of the body which make up a skeleton.

**Fossils:** Parts of an animal which have formed marks within a rock and have turned to rock itself over millions of years.

**Palaeontologist:** A scientist who explores prehistoric times.

**Herbivore:** An animal that gets its energy from eating plants.

**Carnivore:** An animal that gets its energy from eating other animals.

**Omnivore:** An animal that gets its energy from eating both plants and others animals.

1. Ask your children this question: "What do you think dinosaur ate?"

You could use the method Think | Pair | Share

Think: Ask the children to think about how we know what dinosaurs may have eaten? Did they all eat the same thing? (Give the children time to think with their eyes closed).

Pair: Speak to a partner to explain your ideas (children face either other and take turns to explain their reasoning and thoughts).

Share: Children turn and face the teacher, prepared to feedback to the teacher (children don't need to have hands up).

Listen to the children's answers and mark down observations on the slides or on separate pieces of paper.

At this point you can explore children misconceptions about the past (for example that dinosaurs would have eaten people or prepared food).

2. Explain that we can only guess at what dinosaurs ate by looking very closely at the clues left behind within bones and fossils.

3. Reintroduce our Palaeontologist, David (a scientist who explores prehistoric times).

Explain that we are going to watch a short video to find out more about fossils.

[https://videocentralhd.lgfl.org.uk/premium\\_play.aspx?id=1G0KVymyOsNkzP](https://videocentralhd.lgfl.org.uk/premium_play.aspx?id=1G0KVymyOsNkzP)

# DINOSAURS

David discusses how we know what dinosaurs ate. He describes how we can look at their teeth and compare them to the animals we see today. We can also look at fossils of the plants that were around at that time and other evidence.

**4.** Explain that Palaeontologists (scientists who explore prehistoric times) use their knowledge of the world around them to make predictions about what dinosaurs may have eaten, especially looking at their teeth and claws.

**5.** We are going to be palaeontologists and use our knowledge to study 3 different dinosaurs and decide what they should eat. (Print out the Carnivores, Herbivores and Omnivores PDF's).

Divide your students into partners or small groups and give each partner/small groups a set of cards.

Show each dinosaur skeleton and ask students to look closely at the images and work out if it is a Carnivore, Herbivore or Omnivore and vote by flashing their cards.

**6.** The Stegosaurus was a plant eater, which we call a herbivore. It is believed to have eaten plants such as mosses, ferns, horsetails, cycads and conifers or fruits. No grass though, because there was no grass at this time. The Stegosaurus didn't have many teeth.

**7.** T-Rex was a very big meat-eating dinosaur, also called a carnivore. It would have been at the top of the food chain. It is known to have fed on other large dinosaurs, such as Edmontosaurus, Anatosaurus, and Triceratops, and probably could have swallowed smaller dinosaurs in a single bite.

**8.** Triceratops was a herbivore, existing mostly on shrubs and other plant life. Its beak-like mouth was best suited for grasping and plucking rather than biting, according to a 1996 analysis in the journal 'Evolution'. It was also likely to have used its horns and bulk to tip over taller plants.

**9.** Explore the concept of Carnivores, Herbivores and Omnivores by discussing with the children the question 'What do you eat?' Is there anyone in the class who just eats meat? Would that be healthy? Are some children vegetarian? Discuss why some people may not eat meat because of beliefs.

You may have children who have the misconception that if you only eat vegetables, it could be unhealthy, so remember to reinforce the idea of a healthy balanced diet.

**10.** Now the lesson is finished point out and explain all of the dinosaur exploration activities that you have planned/set out within the class (see Dinosaurs exploration activities or ideas and pictures you can place within this slide).