BIG Zoo Lesson: SKULLS

Big Idea: Scientists can learn about the animals by looking at their skulls.

Focus Question:

General Concepts:
Structure and Function
Classification
Adaptations
Predator-Prey
Relationships
Sensory characteristics

Lincoln Brick Park can provide these skulls: *(Please do not allow touching skulls)*

Deer—fox—beaver—bear—racoon—bird—eagle—owl—turkey—hawk—bat—snake

Documents:

- Arizona Skulls: Wildlife Skull Activities

Notice these things when you learn about skulls:
Eye placement
Size
Nasal cavity
Teeth
Size of skulls

Questions:

1. What kind of diet would this animal eat?
2. Is the animal carnivore, herbivore, or omnivore? Why?
3. Could this be a predator or prey animal?
4. How does this skull compare to your observation animal?
5. How might this skull compare with one of the dinosaurs (or other extinct animals)?

VOCABULARY

Canine
Carnivore
Crepuscular
Diurnal
Habitat
Herbivore
Incisors
Mandible
Molars
Monocular vision
Nasal passage
Nocturnal
Omnivore
Orbit
Palate

Expansion:
Divide class into small groups of students. Select different skulls (herbivore, carnivore, omnivore) for small groups to draw in detail, label and write notes about each skull, 8-10 minutes for each sketch. Can keep the identity of skulls a mystery until the debriefing activity.
Debriefing: teacher engages students in discussion about the identity of each animal.

Website:

Skulls Lesson Plan—Mammal Basics
www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_**pdf**/lp**skulls**cience.**pdf**