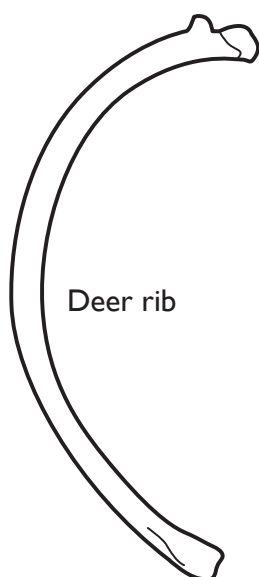
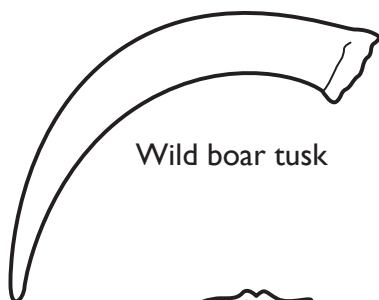


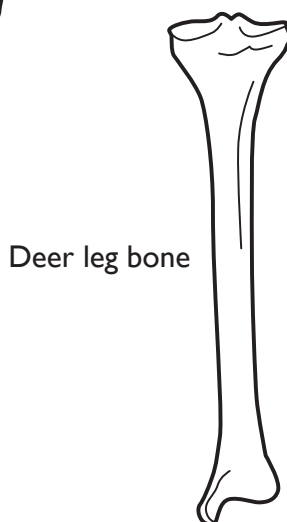
Interpreting bones and shell fragments



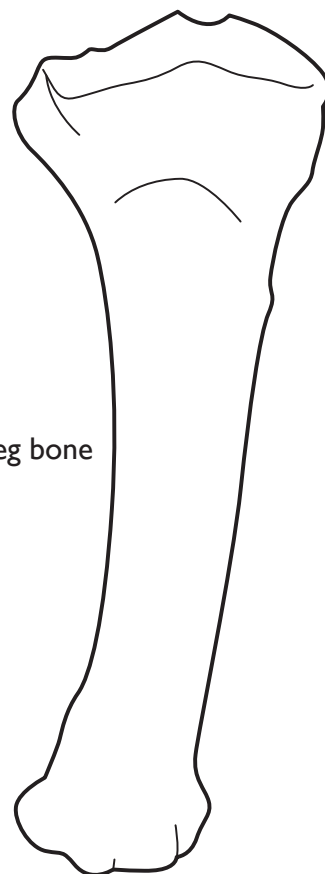
Deer rib



Wild boar tusk



Deer leg bone

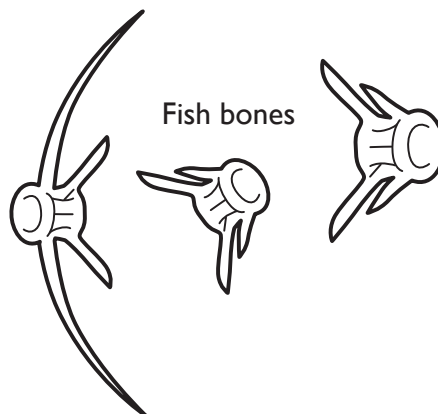


Bison leg bone

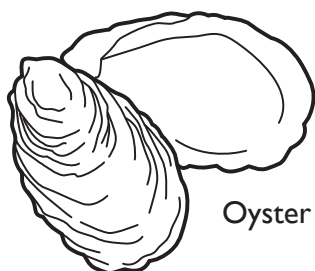


Wild boar feet bones

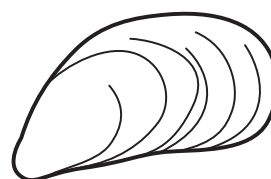
Bird wing bones



Fish bones



Oyster



Mussel

Interpreting bones and shell fragments

Objectives

- To learn how a fragment of bone can be used to identify an animal.

Cross-curricular links

History

- 4a** To find out about people from an appropriate range of sources of information.

Science

Sc1

- 2i** Make comparisons.

- 2j** Use observations to draw conclusions.

Sc2

- 2c** Humans and other animals have skeletons.

Resources

Each child or group will need two copies of worksheet **2** (page 32), scissors, a bowl of sand on a tray, a spoon and pastry brush. You may like the children to make models of the bones with modelling clay.

You may like to have some bones or pictures of bones for the starter. If you wish to display the bones make sure that they have been cleaned in accordance with the guidelines in *Be Safe ! Third Edition* published by the Association for Science Education. The school may have a collection of shells (in the infants department) which could be examined.

Starter

Tell the children that we know about some of the animals by the hard parts they left behind – their bones or shells. You may like to review the human skeleton here and then show the children some pictures of a bird skeleton, a fish and a deer. If you have some bones that have been cleaned in accordance with safety guidelines you could also show them to the children. The children could also look at pictures of shells or look at real specimens.

Main activities

- Tell the children that Stone Age people left the bones and shells of the animals they had eaten around their camp site. This would not have been a big problem to them because as hunter gatherers they would not have stayed long in one place but moved on to follow the herds or look for plants producing fruit.
- Tell the children that archaeologists find evidence by carefully digging in the ground. If they were not careful the evidence would be damaged and even more difficult to interpret.
- Issue the worksheet and explain to the children that they have to cut out the bones and shells and then cut them up into fragments and bury them in their bowls of sand. They do not need to bury all the fragments just a selection – preferably one or two from each animal.
- The children must then swap bowls and, using the spoons and brushes, carefully remove the bones. Go round regularly to check that the children are being careful and slow.
- The children should then set out their fragments and use the second worksheet to help them identify them. They may do this by putting the fragment over the appropriate part of the second worksheet.

Plenary

Ask the children what it might be like on a real archaeological dig and how they would feel about unearthing things that people thousands of years ago had handled. Ask them how they found the identification of the bones and shells. They could produce a table starting at the top with the bones and shells that were the easiest to identify.

Outcomes

The children can:

- Appreciate the need for care in unearthing archaeological specimens.
- Use their observational skills to identify fragments of bones and shells.