

The Inside Scoop on SKELETONS

Scary skeletons? Not in this unit! Help your little ones bone up on science skills with this informative selection of skeleton-related ideas.

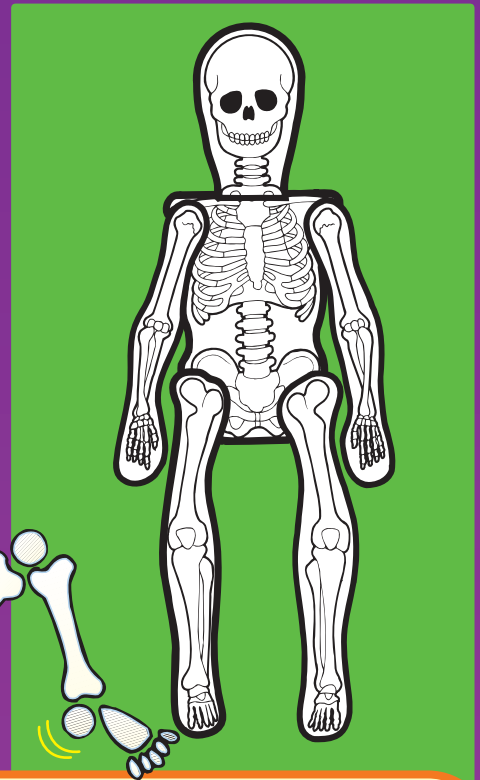
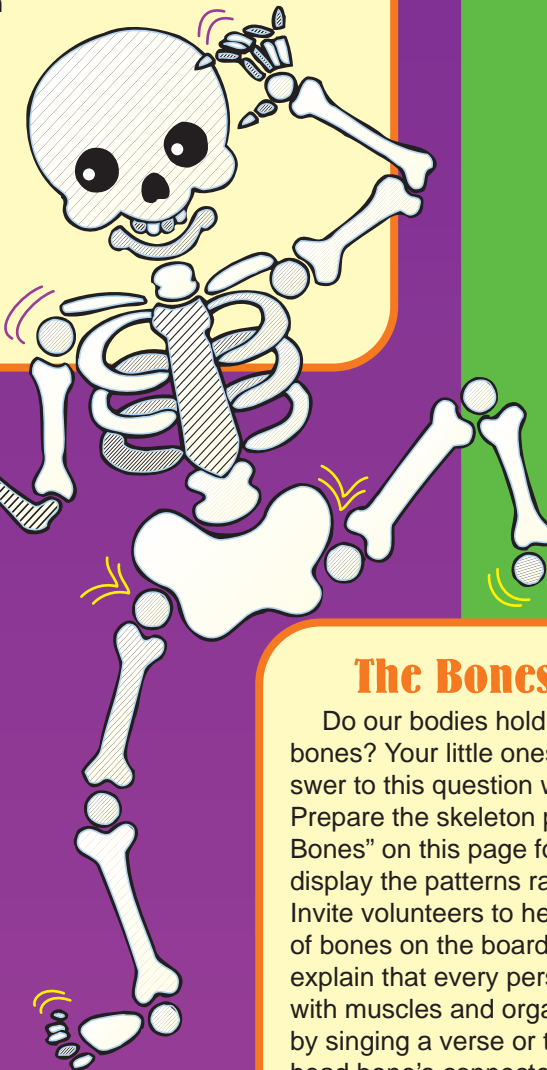
by Lucia Kemp Henry

Bag o' Bones

Even though our bodies look different on the outside, inside we're much the same because of our bones! Begin your skeleton study with a riddle activity that gets students thinking about what's inside them. To prepare, enlarge the skeleton patterns on page 7 by 40 percent and then photocopy them on an 11" x 17" piece of paper. Laminate the page and cut out each pattern piece. Place the pieces in a paper bag labeled with a question mark. Read the riddle below, pausing periodically to allow students to guess the identity of the items in the bag. This bag o' bones won't be a mystery for long!



There are some things inside this bag.
They help in all we do.
These things are **white**.
These things are **hard**.
These things can **grow** with you.
Though they are **strong**,
These things can **break**,
But can be **mended** too.
Do you know what's inside this bag?
They're **bones** like the ones inside of you!

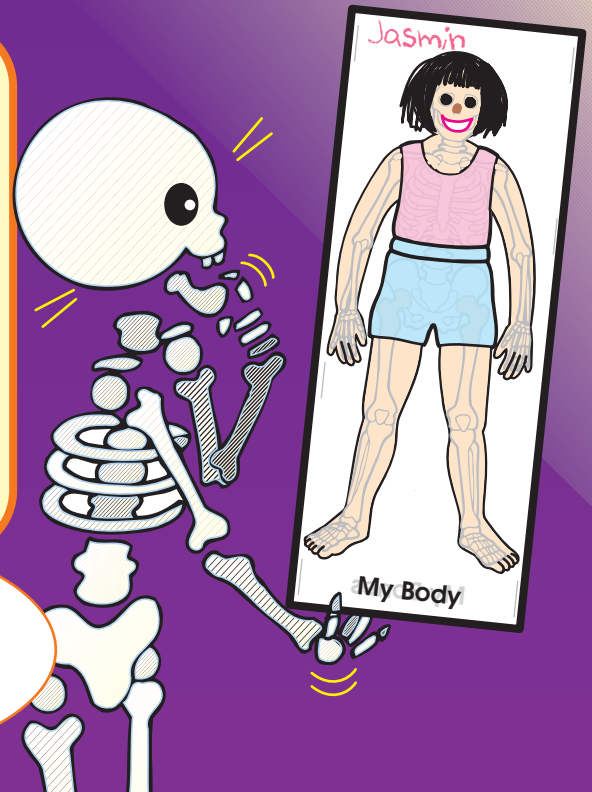


The Bones in Our Bodies

Do our bodies hold just a bunch of jumbled bones? Your little ones can piece together an answer to this question with an easy puzzle activity. Prepare the skeleton pattern pieces from "Bag o' Bones" on this page for flannelboard use. Next, display the patterns randomly on your flannelboard. Invite volunteers to help you arrange the jumble of bones on the board to make a skeleton. Then explain that every person has a skeleton, along with muscles and organs. Complete the activity by singing a verse or two of "Dem Bones." The head bone's connected to the neck bone!

My X Ray

This X-ray activity is a great way to let your little ones take a peek at the bones inside a body. Photocopy the body and skeleton cards on page 8 on white paper for each child. Give each youngster a copy of the patterns and have her personalize her body by drawing hair and features on the head to represent her face and by coloring the clothes and body with light-colored crayons. Next, direct the child to cut out the two halves of her X-ray card. Help each child position the two halves back-to-back so that the skeleton illustration is centered behind the body outline. Then staple the halves together along the top, bottom, and sides. To use the X-ray card, each child holds it perpendicular to the floor with the body side facing her. Then have the child hold her X ray up so that the skeleton side is facing a sunny window or a bright light. What will each little scientist discover? Her very own X ray!



What's Inside of Me?

Now put those skeleton cards from "My X Ray" on this page to good use with this little ditty, which has youngsters relating bones to body parts! As each child sings the first line of the song to the left, have him point to an arm on the body side of his X-ray card. Then have him point to one set of arm bones on the skeleton side as he sings the second line. Sing the song seven more times, replacing the word *arm* with *hand*, *leg*, *foot*, *hip*, *chest*, *neck*, and *head*.

Inside Animals

People aren't the only creatures with bones—animals have skeletons too! In advance, if possible, ask a veterinarian to loan an X-ray film that shows the bones of a dog. Or enlarge the dog skeleton card on page 9 and use it in place of an actual X ray. Share the X ray with students and discuss the bones that are visible and how they are similar to human bones. Reproduce the skeleton cards on page 9 on white paper and the body cards on page 10 on a clear transparency sheet. Cut all of the cards apart. Have students lay each body card on top of its matching skeleton card for a nifty X-ray effect. Cool!

