Skull Identification

* Objectives:
  + Students will use knowledge of carnivores, herbivores, and omnivores to identify types of animal skulls
* Standards:
* Vocabulary:
  + Carnivore
  + Herbivore
  + Omnivore
  + Teeth
  + skull
* Materials
  + Wildlife kit skulls
* Introduction
  + The animal kingdom is primarily divided into 3 different groups based on their diets: Carnivores, herbivores, and omnivores. Carnivores are meat eaters, herbivores are plant eaters, and omnivores eat both meat and plants. Today we will be examining some different animal skulls to try to spot some of the traits of these different kinds of animals.
* Procedure
  + Explain the different types of animals:
    - Carnivores are meat eaters. They have strong jaws and sharp teeth and claws to help them catch and eat their prey. Carnivores will eat other herbivores, omnivores, and even other carnivores.
    - Herbivores eat plants. They have special flattened molars designed to help them rip off and grind up plant material.
    - Omnivores eat both meat and plants. They have both sharp and flat teeth used for eating meat and plant material.
  + So, carnivores will have sharper teeth, herbivores will have flatter teeth, and omnivores will have a combination of both.
    - Another interesting note: Predatory animals have eyes in the front of their skulls, while prey animals have eyes on the sides of their skulls
  + Introduce the skulls to students. There should be seven skulls in the wildlife kit (coyote, beaver, skunk, fox, raccoon, mink, muskrat).
  + Give students time to explore the different skulls. They are labeled by animal (but not by type). Let them discuss and try to identify which skulls are carnivores, omnivores, and herbivores.
* Closure
  + Review the characteristics of each different type of animals’ teeth. Allow students to share their observations about each of the skulls.
  + Reveal each type of skull:
    - Carnivores:
      * Mink
    - Herbivores:
      * Beaver
    - Omnivores:
      * Coyote
      * Skunk
      * Fox
      * Muskrat
      * Raccoon