

FACT SHEET 3: DINOSAUR DIETS

DINO-INVESTIGATORS: IDENTIFICATION



What do we know?

When we look at animals alive today we can see how they have adapted to eat different kinds of food. **Fossils** show us dinosaurs had the same sort of adaptations.

Teeth

Some animals eat only the flesh of other animals. We call these 'meat eaters' or **carnivores**. Carnivores, like lions, crocodiles and wolves, have specially adapted sharp, pointy teeth so that they can tear and slice the meat from their prey.

Some animals, like giraffes, sheep and antelope, eat only plants. Plant eaters are called **herbivores** and their flat teeth have evolved to rip leaves from a plant grind up tough stems.

CLUE:

The large blunt nosed skull of our dinosaur had jaws filled with dozens of large sharp teeth. Its huge jaws would have needed strong muscles and it must have had a very powerful bite. What do you think this would have helped it eat?

Body shape

As well as their teeth, the shape of an animal's body can also tell us what kinds of food they ate.

The crocodile would have a difficult time reaching the leaves of a tree! But the long neck of a giraffe means it can easily get to the leaves on the high branches.

Big, long necked dinosaurs like the diplodocus ate leaves and branches off the trees. While ones like the stegosaurus chewed on plants that they found closer to the ground.

Carnivores not only needed sharp teeth, they needed sharp claws too – to catch and hold their prey.

CLUE:

Our dinosaur skeleton had a massive skull on a relatively short S-shaped neck. It had a long tail that balanced its forward weight. It had short forelimbs with two sharp claws, and relatively long hind limbs. What could it reach?



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THE 3D MOVIE

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