



Skeleton Roundup

This is an activity done with students while teaching them about the skeletal system. The game is not as much about skill as it is about assessing their knowledge of the basic bones of the skeleton.

General summary of the game:

The purpose of this game is to help children identify the basic bones that make up the human body. Children roll hula hoops and attempt to encircle a cone. Each cone has a bone card on it. Students attempt to accumulate as many bones as possible. When all bones are obtained, a skeleton is reconstructed on the floor. The teacher calls out a certain bone and students bring the bone card forward if their team has that specific bone. Children place the bone in the correct position on the skeleton.

Equipment needed:

- One jointed paper skeleton (like the kind they sell at Halloween) which can be taken apart to make copies of the various bones
- 8 ½" card stock to paste bones on and label bones (Several bones will be on one card due to the construction of the jointed skeleton.) If possible, laminate the cards after the bones have been labeled.
- Enough cones so that each card can have its own cone (I made enough cards to make two complete skeletons.)
- 4 to 8 hula hoops, depending upon the size of the class
- 4 to 8 spot markers designating the starting spot for each team
- Shoulder folders (by Sportime) are a great way to keep the cards on the cones
- Another skeleton is helpful (either picture or real) that the students can use as a reference

Game set-up:

- Choose a space appropriate for your age student. Younger students need a smaller space in which to place the cones and older students can handle the challenge of a larger space. Just remember that if your students do not experience success at ringing a card, the space should be made smaller.
- Place the bone cards on a cone with tape, in a slotted cone, or in a shoulder folder (which offers the best protection from tearing up your cards). Scatter the cones around the playing area.
- Place spot markers around all four sides of the playing area. This is where each team will stand to roll the hula hoop.
- Give each team a hula hoop. To avoid confusion, it will help if each hoop looks different.
- Close to the playing area, place a visual aid of a skeleton to help those students who may need some assistance.

How the game is played:

- Students are divided into teams. Have each team make a line at a spot marker. Keep lines small. Give each team one hula hoop.
- On the word "Go," the first person in each line places his hoop on the floor and rolls it out to the cones. If the hoop falls over a cone, the cone and card are brought back and placed behind the team, out of the playing area. If a cone is not captured, the student simply retrieves the hoop and brings it back to the next person in line. (Talk to students about not walking in front of someone who is rolling his hoop.) Students continue to roll the hoops until there are no more cones. If students struggle with getting the last cones, simply move their spot markers closer.
- When all cones are gone from the playing area, the teacher will tell the students that they are going to reconstruct a skeleton. The teacher will start with the cranium and work down the body. As the instructor calls out different bones, groups converse to determine if they have it and where they will place it.
- Any group having the requested bone(s) sends a person forward to place the bone in the correct position.
- Discuss with the class the positioning of the bone. Ask students for their feedback on the correctness of placement.

Options:

- At their own spot marker, let teams construct as much of a skeleton as they can from the cards they have accumulated. Have teams tell the teacher what bones are missing.
- If time does not allow the teacher to have each team tell him/her what bones are missing, have the teacher call out different bones and ask students to raise their hands if they are missing that particular bone.
- After putting together as much of their own skeleton as possible, have students rotate one group to the left to check the work of the next group.

Variations: *(The idea behind the game could be used for almost any unit of study.)*

- For math fun, use numbers and have students add up the numbers they accumulate.
- Divide students into groups of 4. Place 20 cones out in the playing area and put a number 1, 2, 3, or 4 on each cone. (There will be five of each number.) Assign each group a number and see which group can accumulate all five cards of their number. Any number that is encircled, but not needed, is left in the playing area.
- Divide students into groups of 4. Place 20 cones out in the playing area and put a number 1, 2, 3, or 4 on each cone. (There will be five of each number. See which group can accumulate numbers 1-5 first. Any number that is encircled, but not needed, is left in the playing area.
- Use currency values or pictures of money. Ask students to add up their earned amount.
- Use spelling words. See how many words from the spelling list each group can accumulate. Have students identify the words to a teammate and take turns spelling them to each other.