

SKIT #1

Scene: A group is hiking with their instructor, with student #1 at the front, when they come across a large scat in the trail.

Cast: 1 instructor and 4 students

Note: Stage directions are in parenthesis and italics

Student 1: (*points at scat in the trail*) Oh my God!

Instructor: Look, it's a scat. Guess what kind of animal made this scat?

Student 2: Why is the scat hairy?

Instructor: That's a great question! It has hair in it because it's carnivore scat.

Student 1: Is it from a wolf?

Instructor: There used to be wolves here a long time ago, but not any more. There is an animal kind of like wolves that lives around here – can you think of it? (*Pausing for a few seconds*) It starts with the letter "C."

Student 4: Coyote?

Instructor: Maybe coyote. Maybe domestic dog.

Student 1: Dog doesn't start with the letter "C."

Student 2: It could be a mountain lion.

Instructor: That's not a mountain lion scat. At least I don't think it is.

Student 3: Cat starts with a "C."

Instructor: It's not a cat scat. It's too big for a cat. Think about how big cats are. This scat is too big for a cat. So the reason you're seeing hair in the scat is because the animal can't digest the hair, so it comes out in its scat. Pointing at scat. Hey look, there are bones in there too. And of course, the dog or coyote couldn't digest the animals' bones either, so there they are. The bones in there look pretty small. Guess what kind of animal that might have been.

Student 1: A mouse?

Instructor: Yeah, I think those are mouse bones, and they're from an unlucky mouse that got eaten by a dog of some kind.

Student 4: A squirrel?

Instructor: No, I don't think it's from a squirrel. So, mountain lion scat is segmented, like it's got different parts to it, though they are still connected. The ends of mountain lion scat are usually blunt, not pointy. The ends on this scat are pointy.

Student 2: I don't get what you mean by segmented.

Instructor: Kind of like on that part there – that looks kind of segmented.

Student 2: But I thought you said it wasn't mountain lion scat cause mountain lion scat is segmented.

Instructor: I know, well dog scat can be segmented kind of too sometimes, but cat scat is even more segmented It's confusing and they can be hard to tell apart sometimes. I think this is coyote or dog scat, but I may be wrong.

Student 2: Where would a dog live around here?

Instructor: If it was a domestic dog, it could live in a house nearby, like farther up this hill. But if it was a coyote, coyotes live in burrows dug out of the ground. Coyotes are nocturnal animals, but they used to be more diurnal. But because people hunt them sometimes, they have become more nocturnal. So this coyote probably ate the mouse last night and then pooped it out here in the darkness.

Instructor: Now you know how to look at scat like a naturalist. OK, let's move on. Everybody who couldn't see very well take a look at it as you walk by.