

SKIT #2

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: Check it out! Look at the scat [*Student 1*] just found.

Student 2: It's humongous!

Instructor: What do you notice about it?

Student 2: Why is the scat hairy?

Instructor: What do you mean by it being hairy?

Student 2: I mean it looks like it has hairs in it.

Instructor: Those of you who are up close, can you tell us more about whether those look like hairs?

Student 1: They look like hairs to me.

Student 2: It's like made of hair.

Instructor: Can you describe the hairs for us? Color? Length?

Student 1: They look sort of gray.

Student 2: And twisted. It's almost like rope. Scat rope!

Student 1: It looks like a little bone in there too.

Student 2: Yeah!

Student 3: Yeah, it does look like gray hairs and it does look rope-y.

Student 4: I see the bones too.

Instructor: Anyone have an explanation for why there are hairs in the scat? What do you all think?

Student 3: It ate a hairy animal.

Student 2: It's a carnivore.

Student 4: Yeah, animals are meat.

Student 3: You are what you eat!

(Everyone laughs enthusiastically)

Student 1: So I guess this guy is hair and bones, cause that's what he ate.

Instructor: If it's a carnivore, how come there isn't meat in the scat? How come it's just hair and bones?

Student 1: It ate...I mean it digested the meat. But it can't digest the hair and bones, so they come out in its poop.

Student 3: Ooooooh. Bones in your poop! Ouch!

(Everyone laughs enthusiastically)

Student 2: Maybe his name was Harry Bones.

Student 3: Hey Harry! What happened to you? Feelin' kinda poopy today, Harry?

(Everyone laughs enthusiastically)

Instructor: Let's try to figure out more about old Harry Bones. Judging by the bones you can see, what size animal do you think he was?

Student 1: This looks like a little piece of a skull. It's only about an inch long.

Student 3: Maybe it's a mouse, or a rat.

Instructor: Can anyone think of any other animals that might live around here with a skull about that long?

Student 4: A squirrel?

Student 1: I think that a squirrel's head is bigger than that.

Student 4: No, it's not. Squirrels got teeny heads.

Instructor: Do you think the size of an animal's skull would affect whether it could be eaten by another animal or not?

Student 2: Yeah, cause if it has a big skull it couldn't fit it in its mouth.

Student 4: No, because it could eat around the head. It doesn't have to swallow the skull whole.

Instructor: OK, it sounds like based on the size of the skull in the scat we agree that the animal that was eaten was probably small animal with hair. What about the animal that ate it? About what size do you think it was?

Student 1: The size of a person?

Instructor: What makes you think that?

Student 1: It looks kind of like about the same size as a human scat.

Instructor: What animals around here might be that size?

Student 3: Maybe it's smaller than a person.

Student 1: Maybe it's a mountain lion.

Student 4: Or a wolf.

Student 2: There's no wolves around here.

Student 4: Maybe it's just a big dog.

Instructor: Sometimes you can get an idea about this from the shape of the scat. How would you describe its shape?

Student 1: It's like three sort of logs.

Instructor: Can anyone add to [Student 1's] description, and describe the shapes of those "logs" in more detail?

Student 2: They have pointy ends.

Instructor: Are all the ends pointy?

Student 2: No, that one isn't.

Instructor: Anyone else?

Student 2: It's like these little bumpy, lumpy logs.

Instructor: Do you all agree with that description?

All Students: Yeah.

Instructor: I read a book about scat, and it said that cat scats usually don't have pointy ends.

Student 3: Then this isn't mountain lion scat?

Student 4: Maybe it's from a coyote!

Student 2: But it does have one end that isn't pointy.

Instructor: Sometimes scat from members of the dog family has some ends that aren't pointy. It can be hard to tell for sure, and I'm not sure what this came from myself. But we did learn a bit about this scat through our observations. *[pause]* OK, what I want you all to do now is get a partner. And tell your partner what you think happened between old Harry Bones and whatever ate him or her. But we're being scientists here, so keep your explanation based on the evidence we have. Don't just make stuff up.

(Student 3 begins talking excitedly to student 1 while student 4 begins talking excitedly to student 2)

Student 3: I think it was a coyote. A big coyote. And it caught a mouse after waiting by its little hole till it came out. Then he like digested it, and then when he was running' along the trail, he was like, "I gotta go number two..."

Student 4: I think it was a coyote, because of the shape of the scat. I'm not sure what it ate, cause it seems like a mouse-size skull, but I don't know if coyotes would eat something as small as a mouse...

