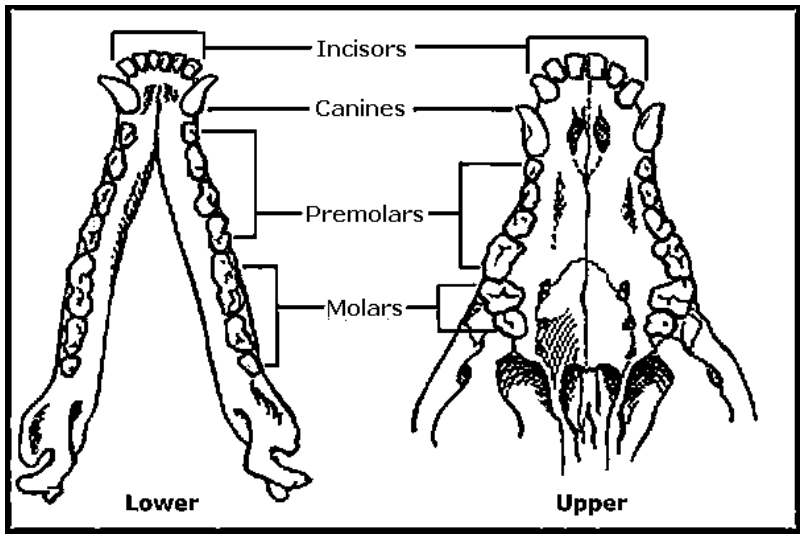
Comparative Skulls

Four types of teeth: incisors, canines, premolars, molars

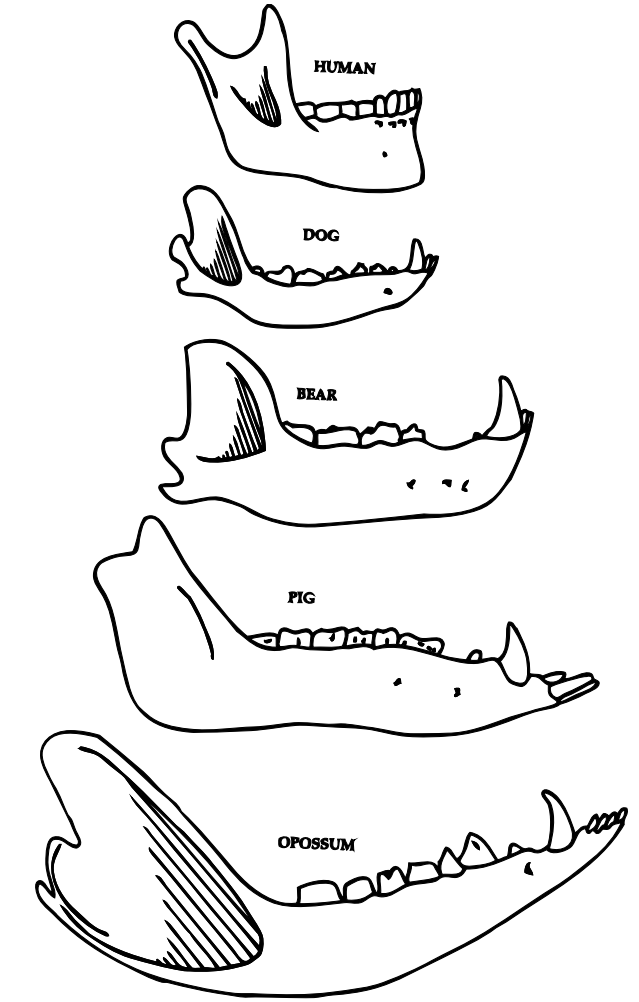


Each tooth type is shaped to reflect a specific function.

Match the functions with the appropriate tooth type (below).

Crushing and Grinding	Incisors
Cutting and Breaking	Molars
Tearing and Ripping	Canines

Instructions: Circle and label each of the 3 main tooth types: using I for incisors, C for canines, M for molars

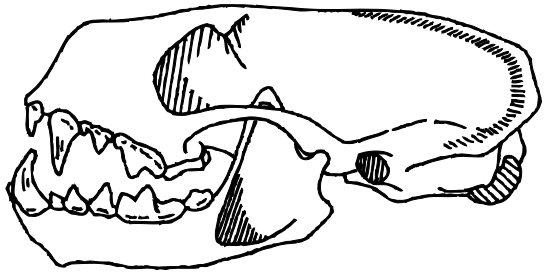


The range of omnivore jaw shapes.

Source of skull diagrams: Skulls and Bones: A guide to the skeletal structures and behavior of North American Mammals. Glenn Searfoss, 1995.

Comparative Skulls

Omnivore, Herbivore or Carnivore? Compare the teeth of the following three mammals. Describe the most prominent diagnostic feature that supports your hypothesis. Which tooth type (incisors, canines, modified premolars, molars) are most specialized (reflecting diet)?

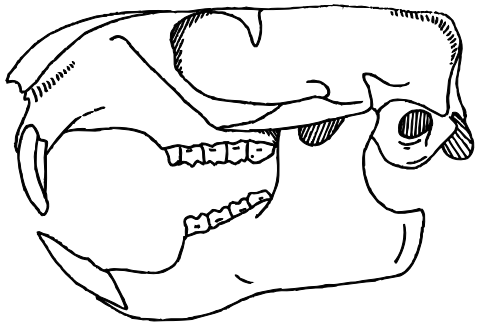


Omnivore, Herbivore or Carnivore? _____

Diagnostic Feature(s): _____

Hypothesized diet: _____

Animal Guess:



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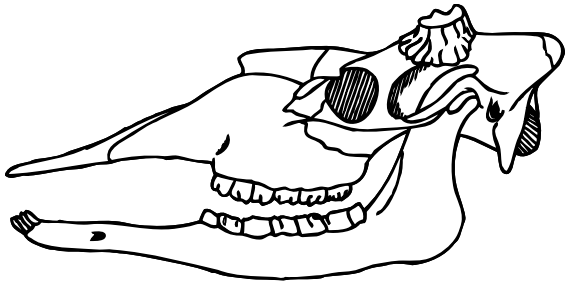

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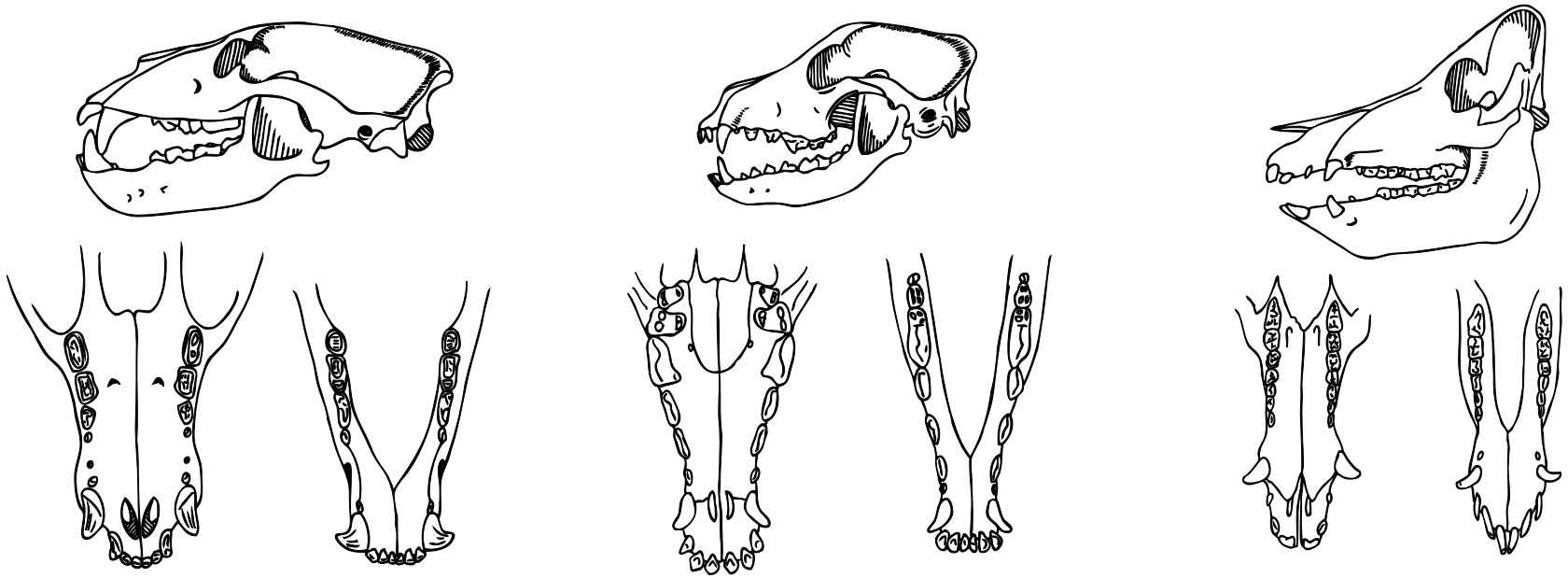
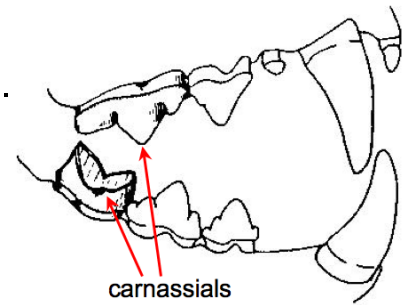
Comparative Skulls

Compare the teeth of the following three omnivores. Omnivore molars have large flat surfaces for grinding food. Canines can be equal in size to other teeth or slightly larger depending on diet.

Which skull belongs to whom? Identify the skull of the bear, dog and pig.



_____ _____ _____



Carnivores (meat eaters) have specially adapted teeth for cutting and shearing meat, called *carnassial teeth.* Which of the three mammals uses carnassial teeth for cutting apart their prey? Carnassial teeth are especially prominent in one of the animals above. Circle the teeth.

Carnassials are odified pre-molars. Elongated like scissor blades.

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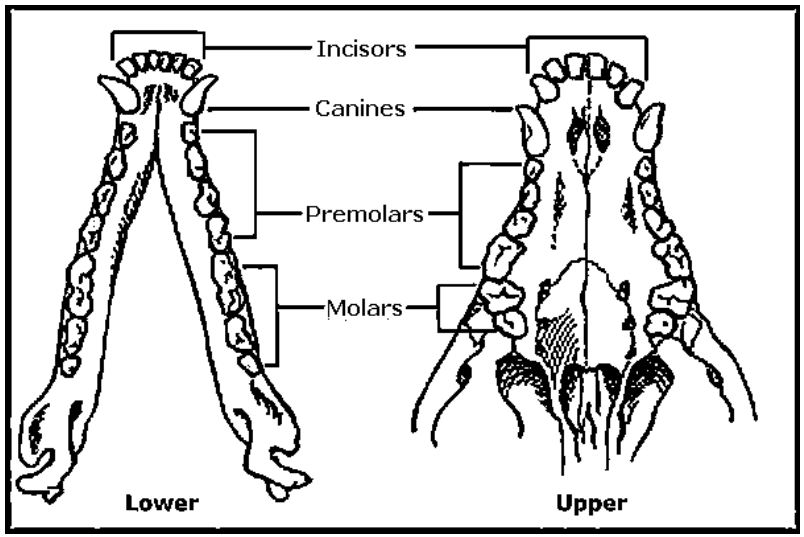
Comparative Skulls

Four types of teeth: incisors, canines, premolars, molars



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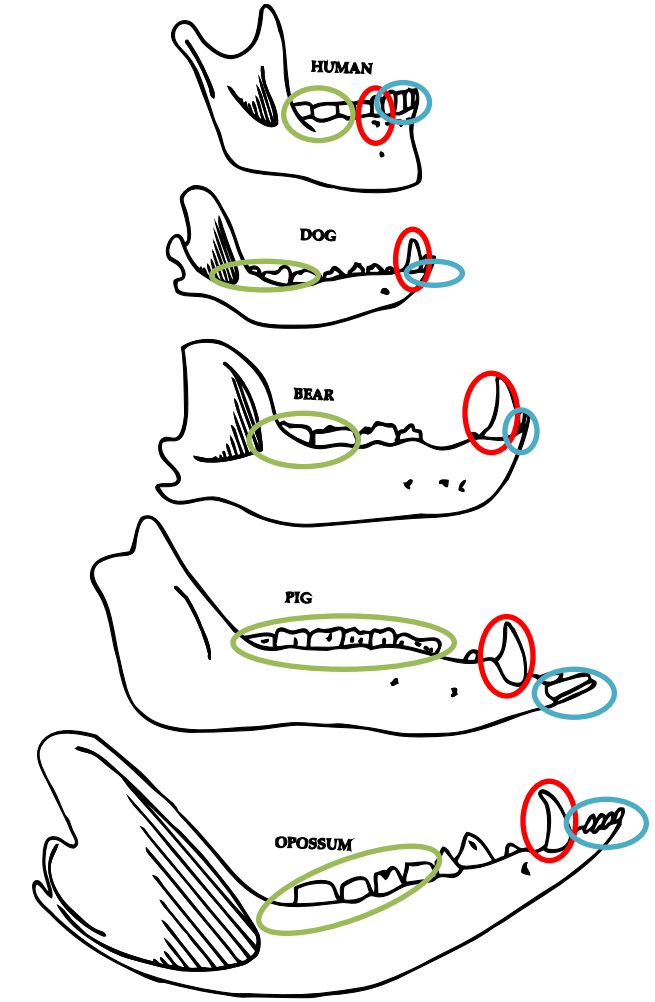

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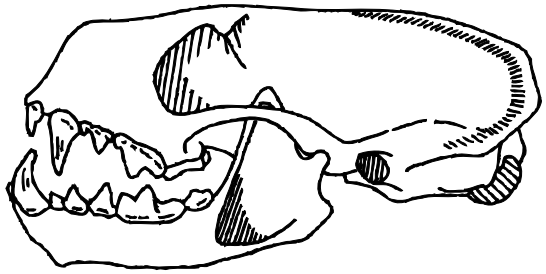
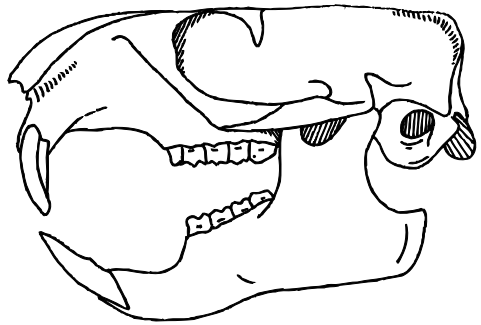


Omnivore, Herbivore or Carnivore? _____CARNIVORE_____

Diagnostic Feature(s): SHARP TEETH, LARGE CANINES, JAW FOR RIPPING AND TEARING

Hypothesized diet: SMALL RODENTS, BIRDS, BERRIES, CARRION, LIZARDS, SNAKES, ETC.

Animal Guess: SKUNK

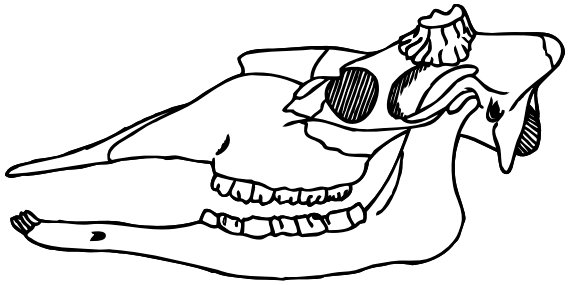


Omnivore, Herbivore or Carnivore? _____OMNIVORE_____

Diagnostic Feature(s): _LARGE INCISORS, NO CANINES, FLAT MOLARS FOR GRINDING

Hypothesized diet: ___WILD GRASSES, BERRIES, INSECTS, SMALL MAMMALS, NUTS_

Animal Guess: WOODCHUCK (GROUNDHOG)



Omnivore, Herbivore or Carnivore? ____HERBIVORE (BROWSER)_____

Diagnostic Feature(s): __NO CANINE TEETH, FLAT MOLARS FOR GRINDING_____

Hypothesized diet: WILLOW AND BIRCH SHOOTS, AQUATIC PLANTS, GRASSES, LEAVES

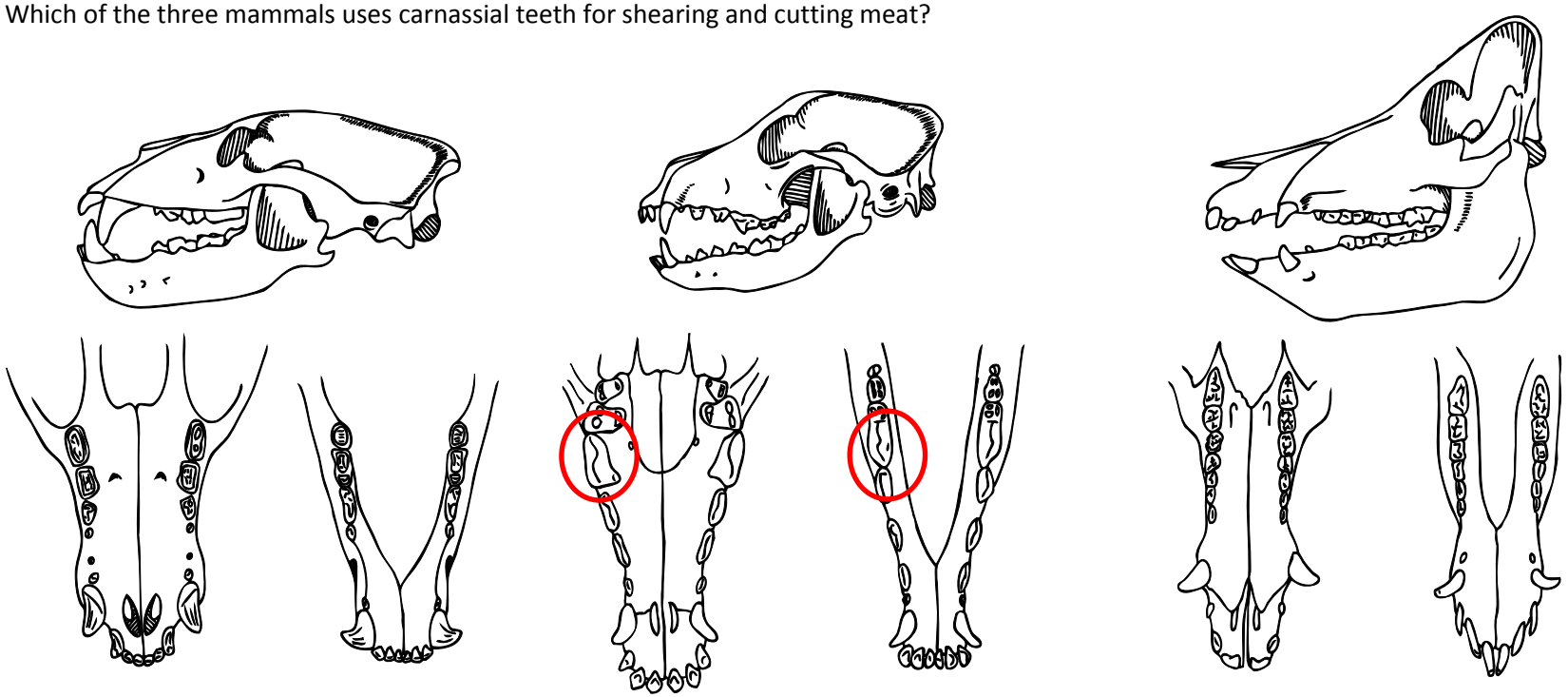
Animal Guess: MOOSE

Source of skull diagrams: Skulls and Bones: A guide to the skeletal structures and behavior of North American Mammals. Glenn Searfoss, 1995.

Comparative Skulls

Compare the teeth of the following three omnivores. Omnivore molars have large flat surfaces for grinding food. Canines can be equal in size to other teeth or slightly larger depending on diet. Note the modified premolar carnassial teeth in the dog and bear.

Which skull belongs to whom? Identify the skull of the bear, dog and pig. Circle the prominent carnassial teeth.
Which of the three mammals uses carnassial teeth for shearing and cutting meat?



Bear **Dog** **Pig**

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