

Dinosaurs have character!



Dinosaurs have different characteristics depending on their type.

Why might this be?

Student Introduction

- ▶ Different dinosaurs have different characteristics such as different types of teeth
- ▶ You will observe a variety of dinosaurs when you visit the museum
- ▶ Can you understand different dinosaur characteristics?
- ▶ Why they were different from dinosaur to dinosaur?

Dinosaurs have been placed into a number of different groups based on physical features

Four of the groups are: Sauropods, Theropods, Ornithopods and Marginocephalians.

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Sauropods ('Lizard-footed')

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- ✓ herbivores
- ✓ long necks, small brains
- ✓ large tails
- ✓ thick, five-toed legs
- ✓ blunt teeth
- ✓ nostrils very close to their eyes
- ✓ large muscular bodies

Examples include Eucamerotus, Pelorosaurus, Diplodocus and Brachiosaurus.

Theropods ('Beast Footed')

- ✓ quick-moving carnivores
- ✓ grasping hands and claws
- ✓ walked upright on two feet
- ✓ sharp, blade-like serrated teeth
- ✓ short arms, long hind legs
- ✓ fast
- ✓ very good eyesight
- ✓ ranged greatly in size, from the chicken-sized Compsognathus, to the famous Tyrannosaurus

Examples include Neovenator, Eotyrannus Lengi, Baryonxys.

DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERISTICS

SUGGEST REASONS FOR THESE CHARACTERISTICS

Ornithopods ('Bird Feet')

- ✓ some had a boney beak as well as teeth so sometimes known as 'duck-billed'
- ✓ mouth had a battery of chewing teeth
- ✓ walked on two legs entirely or alternated between walking on two legs or walking on four legs
- ✓ hind legs longer than fore limbs
- ✓ long tail
- ✓ had no body armour
- ✓ good runners



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Marginocephalia ('Fringed Heads')

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- ✓ distinctive skull structure
- ✓ heavy skull domes
- ✓ shelf or bony frill at the top of their skull
- ✓ some had large nasal horns or parrot-like beaks
- ✓ unique palate (a part of the mouth)
- ✓ herbivores
- ✓ two groups: the Ceratopsians ('horn-faced' dinosaurs, such as Triceratops and Monoclonius) and the Pachycephalosaurians ('thick-headed' dinosaurs that walked upright).



Extension: research question

During the time period when the dinosaurs lived, there were other reptilian animals that were able to fly (pterosaurs), as well as marine reptiles (such as the ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs). No animal from either one of these two groups is considered to be a dinosaur. Why?



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