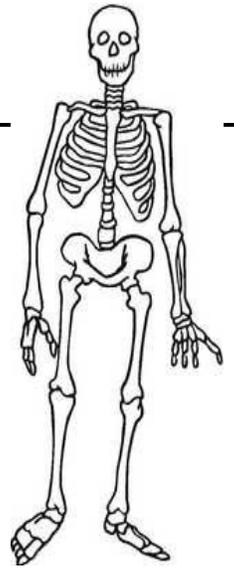


Name: _____ Grade: _____

Your Bones

by Cynthia Sherwood



Without your bones, you would be as floppy as a jellyfish. Our bones allow us to stand up straight. They support us and help us move, but they also protect our body organs.

Our skeleton is made up of all of our bones working together. If you have ever seen a real skeleton in a science class or museum, you might think that bones are dry and dead feeling. But that is not the case. Bones are made of living, growing cells. Inside most bones is soft marrow, which is where many of our blood cells are made. As a baby, you were born with nearly 300 bones. But adults only have about 206 bones because some of the smaller ones join together to form big ones.

Certain bones are especially important. The skull inside your head acts like a helmet for your soft, squishy brain. Your skull helps protect you from injuries to your head. Your spine, or backbone, lets you stand up tall. Your spine also protects the spinal column with all of its nerves inside. Your ribs make a cage to protect your vital organs like the heart, lungs, and liver.

Even though bones are very light, they are also very strong. That is why it usually takes a very bad fall or other serious accident to break a bone. If that does happen, you might wear a cast until new bone cells heal the break in a month or two.

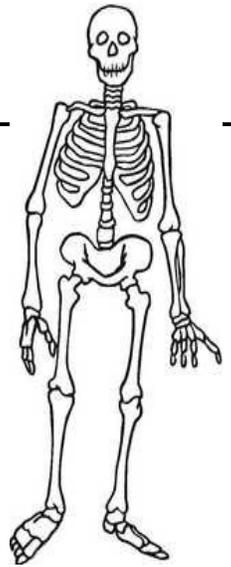
To protect your bones, wear a helmet whenever you ride your bike or skateboard. Knee pads, wrist guards, and other safety gear for sports are a good idea too. Strong bones need the mineral calcium, so drink lots of milk and eat dairy products. Bones also need active exercise, so go out and run, jump, and dance for healthy, strong bones.

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1. Tell whether each statement is true or false.

- a. _____ Your bones are hollow.
- b. _____ Blood cells are made inside your bones.
- c. _____ Adults have more bones than babies do.

2. Why are dairy products good for your bones?

3. Complete the graphic organizer.

Bone(s)	Purpose
ribs	
	helps you to stand up tall and protects the nerves in your spinal column
skull	

4. How many more bones do babies have than adults?

Use your math skills. Show your work.
