

FOOD WEB - FOOD CHAINS - OWL PELLETS

Description:

Students will be required to determine the simple food chain based upon the contents of various bones found in an owl pellet.

Number of Participants: 3

Approximate Time: 60 minutes

The Competition:

1. Student teams of three will be given an owl pellet. They are to observe and examine the external feature of the pellet, dissect and attempt to reconstruct the skeletons of the animals devoured by the owls.
2. Student teams should investigate through the library, the possible diet of various owls and may bring notes from the library resource to the competition.
3. Through the reconstruction of the skeleton students should be able to identify the rodents or birds that are part of the owl's diet.
4. Students need to work quietly and cooperatively to complete the task on the allotted time.
5. All teams will be supplied a pellet, toothpick, tweezers, needles, scissors, and magnifier.
6. A written test will be administered on the diet of various owls, food choices and webs, and predator - prey relationships.

Scoring:

Up to 50 points will be awarded for the procedures and identification of the diet of the owl and up to 50 points will be awarded on the written test.

The activity can be extended to include a population study that is based on the number and kind of prey and the territories of the owls and their prey.