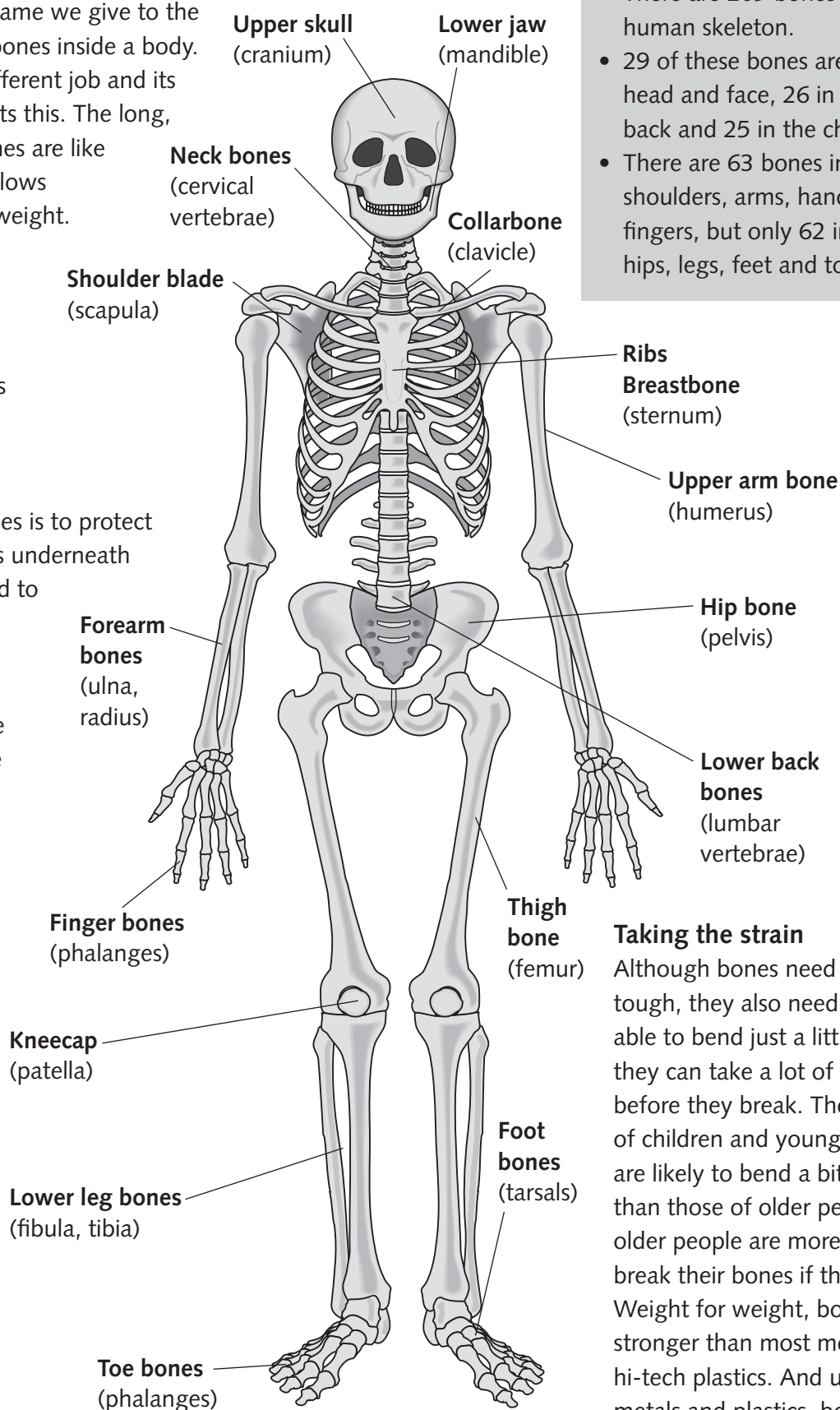


The Skeleton

The skeleton is the name we give to the collection of all the bones inside a body. Each bone does a different job and its size and shape reflects this. The long, thin arm and leg bones are like tubes because this allows them to carry more weight. The bones at the shoulders and hips are wide and flat because they need space for big muscles to attach to them.

Protection

The job of some bones is to protect the important organs underneath them, which we need to stay alive. The dome at the top of the skull bone protects the brain. Ribs create a strong cage for the heart and lungs. The bowl-shape of the pelvis protects the softer organs of the lower body.



Skeleton fact file

- There are 209 bones in the human skeleton.
- 29 of these bones are in the head and face, 26 in the back and 25 in the chest.
- There are 63 bones in the shoulders, arms, hands and fingers, but only 62 in the hips, legs, feet and toes.

Taking the strain

Although bones need to be tough, they also need to be able to bend just a little so they can take a lot of strain before they break. The bones of children and young people are likely to bend a bit more than those of older people, so older people are more likely to break their bones if they fall. Weight for weight, bones are stronger than most metals and hi-tech plastics. And unlike metals and plastics, bones can even repair themselves if they are damaged!

The main bones of the human skeleton with their scientific names.

Name:

Date:

Read the text, then answer the questions.

1. What are all the bones inside a body called?

These questions are about the section “Protection”.

2. Match the bones with what they guard.

ribs lower body organs

skull bone heart and lungs

pelvis brain

3. Why do you think it is important to have bones protecting our organs?

These questions are about the section “Taking the strain”.

4. How does the text say bones are different in children?

5. Name two ways that bones are different to metals and plastics.

6. Find and copy **one** word that tells us that bones are strong.

This question is about the whole text.

7. Draw lines to match the following new information to the section in which you would expect it to be found.

Bones are less dense than most metals.

Skeleton fact file

There are three tiny bones in each human ear.

Taking the strain

Bones in the spine protect the spinal cord.

The Skeleton

Our teeth form part of our skeleton
but are not actually bones.

Protection