

Nova's Guide to the Human Body

Learning objective: To identify that humans have skeletons and muscles for support, protection, and movement.

Read the passage below carefully. Use the information provided to answer the questions that follow in full sentences.

Nova the barn owl loves to watch humans as they move. She has discovered that the human body is like a clever machine. Inside every person, there is a strong frame called a skeleton. This skeleton is made of many bones, which provide support so that humans can stand tall. The skeleton also acts like a suit of armour; for example, the hard skull protects the brain, and the ribcage shields the heart and lungs.

However, bones cannot move on their own. To walk, run, or jump, humans need muscles. Muscles are attached to bones by tough cords called tendons. When a muscle gets shorter, or contracts, it pulls on the bone to make it move. Where two bones meet, there is a joint, like an elbow or a knee, which allows the body to bend. By working together, the skeleton and the muscles allow humans to dance, play sports, and explore the world. Nova thinks it is truly amazing that humans have over two hundred bones keeping them upright and ready for action every single day!

Word bank: skeleton · muscles · support · protection · joints · movement · skull · ribcage

1. According to the text, what are the two main jobs of the human skeleton? (2 marks)

2. Name two specific parts of the skeleton mentioned in the passage that provide protection. (2 marks)

3. Why is it important for muscles to be attached to bones? (2 marks)

4. What might happen to a human's movement if their joints stopped working properly? (2 marks)

5. Nova says the human body is like a 'clever machine'. Do you agree with this? Explain your answer using what you have learnt. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a simple human skeleton and label the skull, the ribcage, and one joint. Add a small drawing of Nova the owl watching them.



Extension challenge: Research how many bones are in the adult human body and compare this to how many bones a human baby has when they are born. Why do you think this number changes?