Fossil identification activity

Grade: 4th
Standard: Comparing fossils to each other or to living organisms reveals features of prehistoric environments and provides information about organisms today.

Instructions:
This activity requires the fossil kit from the CSM museum. Create 8 stations, each station having one of the fossils from the list and a question sheet described below.

Stations
1. Hesperocyon sp. XI6c, (use only 3 largest pieces), aka "dog teeth"
2. Mesohippus XI6f (2 pieces), aka "horse teeth"
3. Icaronycteris XI6a, aka" bat"
4. Boney Fish (Knightera) XI2c, (1 piece)
5. Megalodon tooth XIa
6. Dinosaur skin imprint, (unkown) XI4a-4
7. Dinosaur foot Imprint, therapoda XI4a-1
8. Trilobite, VIIIa

Form groups of about 2-3 students and distribute the groups across the stations. Give each group about 5 minutes at their station to examine the fossil and answer the questions. Rotate groups to the next station once the 5 min are up.

Questions for all stations

1. Describe what you see.
2. What part of the animal is fossilized? (teeth? skin? bone? imprint?)
4. Why do you think so?
5. When do you think the animal lived? (before, after, or during the dinosaur ages?)
6. Why do you think so?

Extra Question for Station 1, 2, 5, 7

How big do you think the animal was? (chicken, dog, human, bus-sized)

Extra Question for station 1, 2, 3 and 5

What did the animal eat or hunt? (carnivore, herbivore, omnivore)