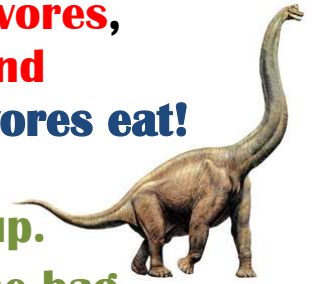




# Herbivore Experiment

An **herbivore** is an animal that eats plants. Scientists study what dinosaurs ate because it tells them a lot about how and where the dinosaurs lived. Several dinosaurs that you may know were **herbivores**, including **Triceratops, Stegosaurus and Brachiosaurus**. Now you can see how herbivores eat!



1. Put 2 leaves in a ziplock bag and zip it up.
2. Now rub your hands on the outside of the bag.  
Did the leaves change much?
3. Now add 2 small rocks to the bag and zip it up again.
4. Rub the outside of the bag. Did the leaves change this time?

The rocks you added are like an herbivore's teeth or **gastroliths\*** found in their stomach. Their teeth and/or gastroliths grind up the leaves so the dinosaur can digest their food easily as they eat.

\*Gastroliths — the word literally means "stomach stones" — are most often used by birds and reptiles, but they can also be found in earthworms, some fish, amphibians, seals and toothed whales. The fossil record tells us many herbivorous dinosaurs also ate rocks — paleontologists know when they find a collection of small stones still trapped inside a fossilized ribcage.

