Lesson 4: Measuring Dinosaurs

Objective:
1. Students will use nonstandard units (paper clips) to measure different dinosaurs.

Materials:
1. Document: Dinosaur Pictures
2. Document: Measuring Dinosaurs by Height Bar Graph
3. Document: Measuring Dinosaurs by Length Bar Graph
4. Poster Size Print of the Height and Length Graph Documents
5. 5 Boxes of Paperclips

Procedure: (Working in groups of four)

1. Distribute the document Dinosaur Pictures and a box of paper clips to each group. Students will work together and measure the height of each dinosaur with the paper clips.

2. They will record their measurements on the Document: Measuring Dinosaurs by Height Bar Graph.

3. After they measure the height, they will repeat the process to measure the dinosaurs’ lengths. They will record their measurements on the Document: Measuring Dinosaurs by Length Bar Graph.

4. After each group records their measurements, they will turn their bar graphs into you. As a group, review the groups’ findings and record the collective
results in a class bar graph. Discuss with the class if there are fluctuations in measurements. What might have caused the different readings?

Extension Idea:

KLRN PBS LearningMedia:
http://klrn.pbslearningmedia.org
On PBS LearningMedia, search for: How Big Are You? It is an interactive activity that explains how students can use nonstandard units to measure the length of dinosaurs.