Student Creature Feature Guidelines

Overall Guidelines

- Your Creature Feature should describe an animal species and its behavior.
    - Teacher note: You can encourage students to choose local animals/California native species, or any species they are interested in (including domesticated animals!)
- *Writing style:* Be creative and point out things that are surprising, interesting, or unusual about the animal species. Think about the 4 types of animal behavior questions from lesson 1 and try to **include and answer at least one of these questions** in your Creature Feature.
- Include an **introduction** and a **conclusion**. Your introduction should grab the reader's interest; for example, you could start with a surprising fact, a cute story, a question, or a combination of these things. Check out previous Creature Features for some examples (https://theethogram.com/category/creature-feature/)
- Include the scientific name (genus and species) of the animal (e.g., Gray wolf is a common name; *Canis lupus* is a scientific name). The first word of the scientific name is the genus and should be capitalized, and the second word is the species name; both parts should be italicized. You may refer to the animal by its common name after including the scientific name at least once. Some animals may even have several common names, which you could also talk about!
- Other basic information you may want to include: where the species lives, what type of animal it is (e.g., mammal, reptile, bird, mollusk, fish, etc.), what it eats.
- Specific guidelines are up to teachers (e.g., font style and size, margins, etc.)
- (*Optional*) In your Creature Feature, correctly use X of the following vocabulary words you learned in the lessons:
    - Development
    - Cause
    - Evolution
    - Function
    - Hypothesis
    - Observation
    - Ethogram

Length: approximately 3-6 paragraphs or 300-1000 words (teachers can decide, shorter is fine, and students may also work in groups on a single piece)

- Alternative option: students may each write one paragraph on the same or related species to be published in a batch with similar student submissions

References:

- **Take-away point:** It is important to get information from reliable sources, write down where your information came from, and give credit to the authors of those information sources.
- Vocabulary *(optional; students may already be familiar with these terms*)

    - *Reference*: a source of information used to write a piece, like a book, website, or scientific research paper
    - *Citation*: a note within a sentence that tells where information in that sentence came from (often a citation contains the author's name and/or year of publication, or a number that corresponds to a list of references)
- **Include citations for at least 2 reliable sources** in your Creature Feature. These could be books, websites, or scientific articles; see below for details on which sources are reliable.
- Include a citation in the sentence where you summarize information from your source. The citation should be a number in brackets placed before the punctuation mark, like this [1].
- Include a numbered list of references at the bottom of your piece. Include important information like the title of the book or article, author, year of publication, URL/link for any websites, and name of the journal (for scientific papers) or magazine (for secondary sources such as Smithsonian Magazine).
- **See example of a reference list below**.
- **Teachers:** modify instructions for references/citations as needed for your students; we suggest using APA, but feel free to use any reference style your students are familiar with.

Some ideas for reliable sources include:

- Primary sources such as scientific research articles (search on Google scholar: https://scholar.google.com/)
- Reliable secondary sources such as science textbooks (e.g., Discover Magazine: https://www.discovermagazine.com/ and Smithsonian Magazine: https://www.smithsonianmag.com/)
- Zoo websites (e.g., San Diego Zoo: https://animals.sandiegozoo.org/)
- Websites of universities or researchers at universities (e.g., Cornell Lab of Ornithology for bird information: https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/home)
- Museum websites (e.g., the Smithsonian)

Avoid citing these unreliable sources:

- Social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Wikipedia (although sometimes Wikipedia pages include links to reliable sources)

Images *(optional)*

- If you would like, you can include images of your animal, such as a scan or photo of artwork that you created, photos you took, or images from online.
- If you do include images, write a *caption* (sentence describing the image and what it shows).
- Also include the artist's name (for artwork or photographs) and the source/URL (if the image is from online).

Lesson 3 will summarize the above guidelines in slides and will include an example Creature Feature from the Ethogram website. The slides will break down and point out elements of this example Creature Feature, such as: introduction, questions posed and answers provided, types of behaviors discussed, scientific name, references, and conclusion.

Author Blurb: Include your nickname or first name only (NO last names), your school, and grade level, or your hometown.
Teachers can modify as desired; students working in groups can come up with group names.

Template for Submissions:

Creature Feature: Name of species

[YOUR MAIN TEXT]

Images with captions *(optional)*

Written by*:* Author name/nickname & blurb
Reference List:

Teachers: How to submit your students' work for publication *[OPTIONAL]*

Please proofread and check your student's work to make sure it follows the above template and guidelines. We will edit all submissions too before publishing.

Email your submissions to the.ethogram@gmail.com using the following guidelines:

1. The subject of the email **must** be "Student Creature Feature".
2. Within the email you **must** provide:
    - Teacher's name
    - Author's first name(s), nickname(s), or group name(s) (Do NOT include students' last names)
    - An attached/uploaded file for each submission (word documents preferred, links to google docs also okay)
3. The following is optional, but encouraged to provide:
    - School name and grade of the author(s)
    - Attached images of your students' artwork or photographs
    - Caption for the artwork/photographs (if included)

NOTE: Student Creature Features will be published in the Young Explorers section of the website. It's okay if your students chose a species that was previously featured on the Ethogram

website.

Example Creature Feature
https://theethogram.com/2020/09/01/creature-feature-hummingbirds/

Example Reference List

References:

1. BirdNote (podcast). “Get to Know the Bee Hummingbird, the World’s Smallest Bird.” *Audubon*, 14 May 2019. http://www.audubon.org/news/get-know-bee-hummingbird-worlds-smallest-bird
2. Heynen, I., Boesman, P. F. D., & Kirwan, G. M. (2020). Giant Hummingbird (*Patagona gigas*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (J. del Hoyo, A. Elliott, J. Sargatal, D. A. Christie, and E. de Juana, editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.giahum1.01
3. “Hummingbirds of Chamizal National Memorial.” *National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior, Chamizal National Memorial.* https://www.nps.gov/cham/learn/nature/upload/Hummingbirds-of-Chamizal_english.pdf
4. San Diego Zoo (2020). Hummingbird. *San Diego Zoo Global Animals and Plants*. https://animals.sandiegozoo.org/animals/hummingbird
5. Winkler, D. W., Billerman, S. M., & Lovette, I. J. (2020). Hummingbirds (*Trochilidae*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (S. M. Billerman, B. K. Keeney, P. G. Rodewald, and T. S. Schulenberg, editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.trochi1.01
6. Campbell, V. (2020). “Summertime in the United States of Hummingbirds.” *All About Birds*, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. http://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/summertime-in-the-united-states-of-hummingbirds/