**Think and Write!**

Day 1

Name Date

Title of story **“Dinosaur Ghosts”**

***In 1947 a mysterious collection of dinosaur bones was discovered in New Mexico. It’s not certain how they died, but scientists have tried to use what they do know to figure out what must have happened to the dinosaurs. How does the writer build a logical argument to support his claim that the ghost dinosaurs died first by drought, and then by flood?***

1.What will you be writing about? **Underline** the Focusing Question in the assignment above.

2. What information will you need to be able to answer the Focusing Question and to explain your answer? Turn to a partner. Look carefully at the graphic organizer as you **discuss** the answers to the questions below. **Color in** the circle next to each question after you have talked about it.

* What information will you put in the first two columns?
* Where will you get this information?
* What information will go in the third column?
* Where will this information come from?
* Why are you gathering all this information? What are you trying to figure out?

***How does the writer build a logical argument to support his claim that the ghost dinosaurs died first by drought, and then by flood?***

**Focus Statement: The writer uses alternate theories, with evidence to support and refute them, to build a logical argument supporting his claim that the dinosaurs died first by drought, then by flood.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***What the theory states*** | ***Evidence supporting***  ***theory*** | ***Evidence refuting***  ***theory*** | *Page* |
| Example...  got stuck in mud  -----------------------------------  Quote  “dinosaurs’ feet sink deep in the dark, sticky earth” | Something like this did happen to some dinosaurs at LaBrea tarpits | skeletons would be standing, these are not  Quote  “as they struggled, their heavier bodies would have been buried more deeply than their arms and heads” | 199 |
| Example  -----------------------------------  Quote |  |  |  |
| Example  -----------------------------------  Quote |  |  |  |
| Example  -----------------------------------  Quote |  |  |  |

3. When the class is ready, your teacher will reread the story aloud.

You will have **two jobs** here!

First, you and your class need to decide on the answer to the Focusing Question. It needs to have an answer that is a complete statement. This is called a Focus Statement.

• Remember, the Focusing Question is: “*How does the writer build a logical argument to support his claim that the ghost dinosaurs died first by drought, and then by flood?”*

How could you answer the Focusing Question in a single sentence? Turn and **tell** your partner how you might answer.

• Now, with your teacher, **develop** a class Focus Statement.

• Then, copy that Focus Statement onto the space above the graphic organizer, so it will be easy to refer back to as you gather evidence.

4. Next, your job is to **listen** **carefully** for information that will help you to complete the graphic organizer. During the read aloud, every time you hear some evidence from the text that you think belongs on the chart, **raise your hand**. The class will stop to discuss what you have noticed and decide whether to add that evidence to the chart.

You may have noticed that there is not much room to write in each box! Don't worry, your teacher will show you how to **"take notes"** in that small space using just key words and phrases.

5. Once you have taken notes, look back at your assignment, and **copy** the Focusing Question and the **Focusing Statement** onto your Writing Draft Sheet.

**Think and Write!**

Day 2

Name Date

Title of story **“Dinosaur Ghosts”**

1. Look at your Writing Draft Sheet from yesterday. With a partner, take turns. Have one person **read** the Focusing Question and the other person read the Focus Statement. Then **switch**, so that you each have read both.

2. **Look** at your graphic organizer. **Listen** carefully as your teacher gives an example of how to write the first evidence paragraph of your response. Where are these sentences coming from?

On your graphic organizer, **check the box** next to the evidence your teacher used to write this part.

3. Now comes the fun part! Talk your piece! Use your graphic organizer. **Point** to each row of the chart and **tell** your partner what you will write. Then listen as your partner explains what he/she will write.

*On your own...*

4. Look at your Writing Draft Sheet. **Re-read** what you have written so far. Then **write** about each piece of evidence. **Check off** each piece of evidence on the graphic organizer as you write.

5. A Concluding Statement restates the focus of the piece. Look at your Focus Statement. How could you **restate** it? Use the same idea, but different words. **Write** your Concluding Statement at the end of your piece.

6. Now, think about this question: *“Could new evidence cause scientists to change their minds?”* Your teacher will lead a **discussion** to help you improve and expand your conclusion. When you are ready, **add a few sentences** to your conclusion that show your thinking about this.

7. With a pencil in your hand, **read** your piece aloud to a partner. **Revise and edit** as you read.

Name : Date:

Title of story: **“Dinosaur Ghosts”**

*Writing Draft*

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***Teacher Pages***

*Sample Graphic Organizer (additional evidence may be added by students)*

***FOCUSING QUESTION:*** *How does the writer build a logical argument to support his claim that the ghost dinosaurs died first by drought, and then by flood?*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***What the theory states*** | ***Evidence supporting***  ***theory*** | ***Evidence refuting***  ***theory*** | *Page* |
| got stuck in mud  -----------------------------------  Quote  “dinosaurs’ feet sink deep in the dark, sticky earth” | Something like this did happen to some dinosaurs at LaBrea tarpits | skeletons would be standing, these are not  Quote  “as they struggled, their heavier bodies would have been buried more deeply than their arms and heads” | 199 |
| buried by volcano  -------------------------------------------------  Quote | volcanoes very common source of sudden loss of life  ------------------------------------  Quote  “Many of the earth’s great catastrophes have been caused by erupting volcanoes” | would be ash nearby  ------------------------------------  Quote  “no collapsed silica bubbles have been found yet in the rocks” | 199 |
| hit by asteroid  ------------------------------------  Quote  “the collision would have sent great clouds of dust into the air that blocked sunlight” | asteroids contain iridium, which has been found in some very old rocks elsewhere  ------------------------------------  Quote | no iridium in these rocks  animals would have died slowly, not all in one place like these  ------------------------------------  Quote | 200 |
| could have been poisoned  Quote | some evidence of arsenic at site  Quote  “they did find a poison, arsenic, in both the rocks and bones” | fish seem to have survived, couldn’t if poisoned  ------------------------------------  Quote  “could they have survived in a poisoned water hole?” | 203 |
| died from flood  ----------------------------------------  Quote | positions of skeletons  ------------------------------------  Quote  “the tangled positions and good conditions of the skeletons might well have been caused by a flood” | other skeletons found on sides  ------------------------------------  Quote  “this position happens only if a dead animal is undisturbed long enough for its ligaments to shrink” | 203 |
| died from drought  ----------------------------------------  Quote | positions of animals  ------------------------------------  Quote  “this position happens only if a dead animal is undisturbed long enough for its ligaments to shrink” | other animals died in tangles, wouldn’t happen with a drought  ------------------------------------  Quote | 205 |
| died from drought, then flood  ----------------------------------------  Quote  “too little water – then too much” | positions of animals – some died from drought, then came floods and killed the rest  ------------------------------------  Quote  “when the waters dry up, they leave behind both the dinosaurs that had died earlier in the drought and the newly drowned dinosaurs” | None – this explains all positions of animals  ------------------------------------  Quote  “it’s the explanation that fits most of the clues” | 206 |

**POSSIBLE FOCUS STATEMENT:** **The writer uses alternate theories, with evidence to support and refute them, to build a logical argument supporting his claim that the dinosaurs died first by drought, then by flood.**

Additional notes to the teacher about this piece:

**•** Students may need extra help coming up with the Focus Statement for this piece, since the

Focusing Question is actually requiring an understanding of the author’s argument / structure

* An extension / reflection question for the conclusion of this piece might be, *“Could new evidence cause scientists to change their minds?”*

*Sample Writing*

*NOTE: this is for the teacher’s use only, not for students. The purpose is to show the teacher what the final piece might look like when students have completed their work.*

In 1947 a scientist named Ned Colbert made an amazing discovery in New Mexico of large numbers of bones belonging to small dinosaurs named *coelophysis*. They had died in groups and formations that were puzzling to Colbert. Since then, other paleontologists have studied these dinosaur fossils and tried to figure out what happened to them. People have advanced various theories about what they think happened, based on evidence from the site and on what they know about the earth. In this text, Gillette makes the claim that the dinosaurs were killed by a combination of events, first a drought and then a flood. The writer uses the other theories, with evidence to support and refute them, to build a logical argument supporting his claim that the dinosaurs died first by drought, then by flood.

One theory that the author examines is the idea that the dinosaurs died because they got stuck in the mud. Scientists know that this did happen to other dinosaurs in the LaBrea tar pits. However, that claim does not make sense in this case because the dinosaur skeletons would have been upright as they struggled to get out of the mud (p. 199). These dinosaurs are lying down. Therefore, the “mud theory” does not seem to be correct.

Another theory that the author notes is the idea that they were buried by a sudden volcanic eruption as they stood at the riverbank. This would explain why there are so many dinosaurs piled together in one place. But if that had happened, there would be some volcanic ash (silica) left near the site. According to the author, “no collapsed silica bubbles have been found yet in the rocks” (p. 199). So again, this theory does not seem to be a good explanation for what happened to the *coelophysis*.

A third claim that the author considers is the idea that the dinosaurs were killed by an asteroid hitting the earth millions of years ago (p. 200). This would have drastically changed the climate and killed many living things. An asteroid would have left traces of the mineral iridium, and it is true that iridium has been found near other very old rocks. Still, that event would have meant that these animals would have collapsed and died over a large area, one at a time, not all together as these fossils are. In addition, there has been no iridium found in the rocks where these fossils are. So, once again, this theory about what happened to the little dinosaurs seems unlikely to be true.

The article mentions several other claims about what happened to the dinosaurs. One is that they were poisoned, a second is that there was a huge flood, and the third is that there was a catastrophic drought. In each case, the author points out the evidence that supports it, then also the evidence that refutes it.

Finally, the author advances the claim that the dinosaurs were killed by two events in sequence, first a drought and then a flood. The evidence that supports this is that some skeletons were found with fish bodies beneath them, indicating that they were gathered near a little remaining water trying to find food. Some have died of starvation and their bones are the ones lying flat and separated. According to this claim, others were overcome by flood waters and mud, and they died “in tangles”. In a few days, all of the skeletons were covered by the mud brought by the flood, and there they remained until they were discovered millions of years later (p. 205) This claim would explain all the evidence at the site, with no evidence to refute it.

To conclude, scientists need to proceed logically and reasonably, and look carefully at all evidence before making a claim. This is just what these scientists have done to try to figure out the mystery of the *coelophysis.* Perhaps someday there will be new evidence, but for now this claim makes a lot of sense!

Supports for English Language Learners (ELLs)

to use with Basal Alignment Project Lessons

When teaching any lesson, it is important to make sure you are including supports to help all students. We have prepared some examples of different types of supports that you can use in conjunction with our Basal Alignment Project Lessons to help support your ELLs. They are grouped by when they would best fit in a lesson. While these supports reflect research in how to support ELLs, these activities can help ALL students engage more deeply with these lessons. Note that some strategies should be used at multiple points within a lesson; we’ll point these out. It is also important to understand that these scaffolds represent options for teachers to select based on students’ needs; it is not the intention that teachers should do *all* of these things at every lesson.

**Before the reading:**

* Read passages, sing songs, watch videos, view photographs, discuss topics (e.g., using the [four corners strategy](http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/four-corners)), or research topics that help provide context for what your students will be reading. This is especially true if the setting (e.g., 18th Century England) or topic (e.g., boats) is one that is unfamiliar to the students.
* Provide instruction, using multiple modalities, on selected vocabulary words that are *central to understanding the text*. When looking at the lesson plan, you should note the Tier 2 words, particularly those words with high conceptual complexity (i.e., they are difficult to visualize, learn from context clues, or are abstract), and consider introducing them ahead of reading. For more information on selecting such words, go [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3167/selecting-and-using-academic-vocabulary-in-instruction). **You should plan to continue to reinforce these words, and additional vocabulary, in the context of reading and working with the text. (See additional activities in the During Reading and After Reading sections.)**

**Examples of Activities:**

* Provide students with the definition of the words and then have students work together to create [Frayer models](http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/frayer-model) or other kinds of word maps for the words.
* When a word contains a prefix or suffix that has been introduced before, highlight how the word part can be used to help determine word meaning.
* Keep a word wall or word bank where these new words can be added and that students can access later.
* Have students create visual glossaries for whenever they encounter new words. Then have your students add these words to their visual glossaries.
* Create pictures using the word. These can even be added to your word wall!
* Create lists of synonyms and antonyms for the word.
* Have students practice using the words in conversation. For newcomers, consider providing them with [sentence frames](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion) to ensure they can participate in the conversation.
  + Practice spelling the words using different spelling practice strategies and decoding strategies. Students could take turns spelling with a partner.
* Use graphic organizers to help introduce content.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students fill in a [KWL chart](http://www.nea.org/tools/k-w-l-know-want-to-know-learned.html) about what they will be reading about.
* Have students research setting or topic using a pre-approved website and fill in a chart about it. You could even have students work in groups where each group is assigned part of the topic.
* Have students fill in a bubble map where they write down anything that they find interesting about the topic while watching a video or reading a short passage about the topic. Then students can discuss why they picked the information.

**During reading:**

* Read the text aloud first so that ELLs can hear the passage read by a fluent reader before working with the text themselves.
* Allow ELLs to collaborate in their home languages to process content before participating in whole class discussions in English. Consider giving them the discussion questions to look over in advance (perhaps during the first read) and having them work with a partner to prepare.
* Encourage students to create sketch-notes or to storyboard the passage when they are reading it individually or with a partner. This will help show if they understand what they are reading as they are reading it.
* Ask questions related to the who, what, when, why, and how of the passage. For students that may need a little more help, provide them with [sentence stems](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion).
* Continue to draw attention to and discuss the words that you introduced before the reading.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students include the example from the text in their glossary that they created.
* Create or find pictures that represent how the word was used in the passage.
* Practice creating sentences using the word in the way it was using in the passage.
* Have students discuss the author’s word choice.
* Use graphic organizers to help organize content and thinking.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students fill in a chart to keep track of their 5ws while they read to help them summarize later and figure out the central idea of a passage.
* It may again be beneficial to have somewhere for students to store new words that they encounter while reading the text. Students could use a chart to keep track of these new words and their meanings as they read.
* If you had students fill in a KWL, have them fill in the “L” section as they read the passage.
* Utilize any illustrations or text features that come with the story or passage to better understand the reading.
* Compare/contrast the passage with what the illustrations convey about the passage. Have students consider if the illustrations look the way they visualized the passage in their own minds or if the passage matches their predictions based on the illustrations.
* Identify any text features such as captions and discuss how they contribute to meaning.

**After reading:**

* Present directions for any post-reading assignments orally and visually; repeat often; and ask English Language Learners to rephrase.
* Allow ELLs to use English language that is still under development. Students should not be scored lower because of incorrect spelling or grammar (unless the goal of the assignment is to assess spelling or grammar skills specifically). When grading, be sure to focus on scoring your students only for the objective(s) that were shared with students.
* Scaffold questions for discussions so that questioning sequences include a mix of factual and inferential questions and a mix of shorter and more extended responses. Questions should build on each other and toward inferential and higher-order-thinking questions. There are not many factual questions already listed in the lesson instructions, so you will need to build some in as you see fit. More information on this strategy can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/aligned/creating-sequencing-text-dependent-questions-support-english-language-learners/).
* Reinforce new vocabulary using multiple modalities

**Examples of activities:**

* Using the words that you had students work with before reading, have students write sentences in reference to the passage that you just finished reading.
* Require students to include the words introduced before reading in the culminating writing task.
* For newcomers, print out pictures that represent the words that you focused on and have students match the words to the pictures.
* Based on different features of the words, have the students sort them into different categories and explain their choices. For example, the students could sort the words by prefixes, suffixes, connotation, etc.
* After reading the passage, continue to examine important sentences (1–2) in the text that contribute to the overall meaning of the text. Guide students to break apart these sentences, analyze different elements, and determine meaning. More information on how to do this, including models of sentence deconstruction, can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3160/juicy-sentence-protocol).
* Provide differentiated scaffolds for writing assignments based on students’ English language proficiency levels.

**Examples of Activities:**

* For all students, go over the prompt in detail, making sure to break down what the prompt means before having the students get to work. Then have the students explain the directions back to you.
* Have students create an evidence tracking chart during reading, then direct them to look back over their evidence chart and work with a group to see if their evidence matches what the rest of the class wrote down. If some of the chart does not match, students should have a discussion about why.
* For students who need more support, model the proper writing format for your students and provide them with a properly formatted example for reference.
* For newcomers, you may consider creating sentence or paragraph frames to help them to write out their ideas.
* To further discussion about the passage, have students create their own who, what, when, where, why, and how questions related to the passage to ask each other and have students pair up and practice asking each other the questions. If available, pair students of the same home language to support the use of language still under development.