

# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE PERFORMANCE TASK LESSON PLAN

**SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE** was created for and used as a two-class period learning and assessment task for a seventh grade Life Science unit called “Structured for Survival.”

**The performance task has these components:**

- The statement of *background* provides a “story line” for the task. It helps make the task interesting to the students.
- The statement of the *task* tells the student what he or she must do.
- The statement of *audience* tells the student the audience for whom the final product is intended. In this case, the final audience is “xeno-biologists/scientists.”
- The statement of *purpose* section explains what impact the writing is to have on the target audience. Finally, the *procedure* briefly outlines the steps to be taken to complete the task.

The graphic organizer (Figure 2.2) accompanies the performance task. The student uses the graphic framework as a planning step to organize the information and eventually to write the final product. In this task, the graphic organizer is not assessed or graded.

The assessment list (Figure 2.3) is given to the student at the same time as the performance task. The assessment list shows the student what to pay attention to. The teacher distributed 100 points to emphasize how important each item on the list is. An inspection of the specific items on this list indicates that the student must know the science content related to the life functions of animals (and plants, depending on which organism the student selects) and how their body structures enable them to meet those functions within the context of specific environments.

Students use the assessment list before they begin their work, during their work, and for self-assessment just before they turn it in to the teacher. In this case, no peer assessment is done.

# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE

## BACKGROUND

A strange creature has just been discovered on a moon circling a gas giant. The explorers have sent you a picture, but neglected to include any additional information about the creature. So, other than the planet name, you do not know what kind of habitat it lives in, or how it interacts with its environment.

## TASK

Your task is to write a scientific explanation of the type of environment in which you think this creature lives. You may use drawings to help make your points.

## AUDIENCE

The audience for your paper is other scientists who work at SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Life Institute). These scientists will want strong proof for any opinion that you might have.

## PURPOSE

The purpose is for you to use your knowledge of science and writing skills to convince other scientists of your opinion.

## PROCEDURE

1. Complete the graphic organizer.
2. Provide support for each of your pieces of evidence.
3. Write your explanation. You may use drawings to help you make your point.
4. Use the assessment list for the Science Fiction Creature Feature.



# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE

## BACKGROUND

A strange creature has just been discovered on the planet Ixchel. The explorers have sent you a picture, but neglected to include any additional information about the creature. So, other than the planet name, you do not know what kind of habitat it lives in, or how it interacts with its environment.

## TASK

Your task is to write a scientific explanation of the type of environment in which you think this creature lives. You may use drawings to help make your points.

## AUDIENCE

The audience for your paper is other scientists who work at SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Life Institute). These scientists will want strong proof for any opinion that you might have.

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# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE

## BACKGROUND

A strange creature has just been discovered on the planet Glor. The explorers have sent you a picture, but neglected to include any additional information about the creature. So, other than the planet name, you do not know what kind of habitat it lives in, or how it interacts with its environment.

## TASK

Your task is to write a scientific explanation of the type of environment in which you think this creature lives. You may use drawings to help make your points.

## AUDIENCE

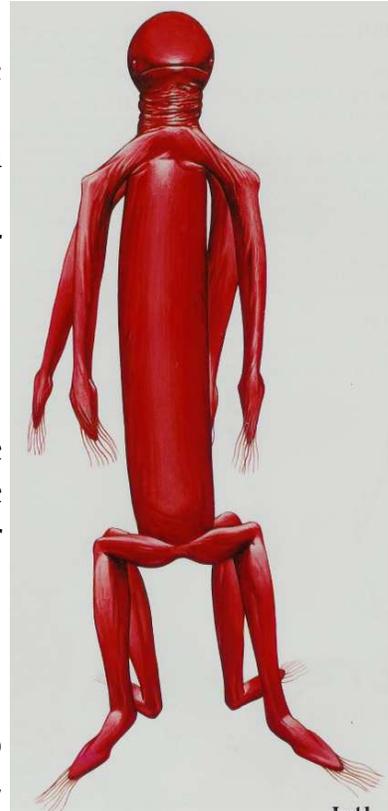
The audience for your paper is other scientists who work at SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Life Institute). These scientists will want strong proof for any opinion that you might have.

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# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE

## BACKGROUND

A strange creature has just been discovered on the planet Lithia. The explorers have sent you a picture, but neglected to include any additional information about the creature. So, other than the planet name, you do not know what kind of habitat it lives in, or how it interacts with its environment.

## TASK

Your task is to write a scientific explanation of the type of environment in which you think this creature lives. You may use drawings to help make your points.

## AUDIENCE

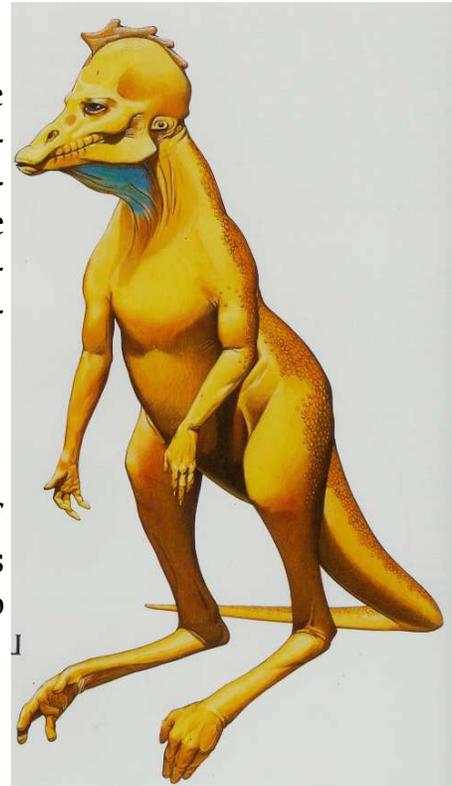
The audience for your paper is other scientists who work at SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Life Institute). These scientists will want strong proof for any opinion that you might have.

## PURPOSE

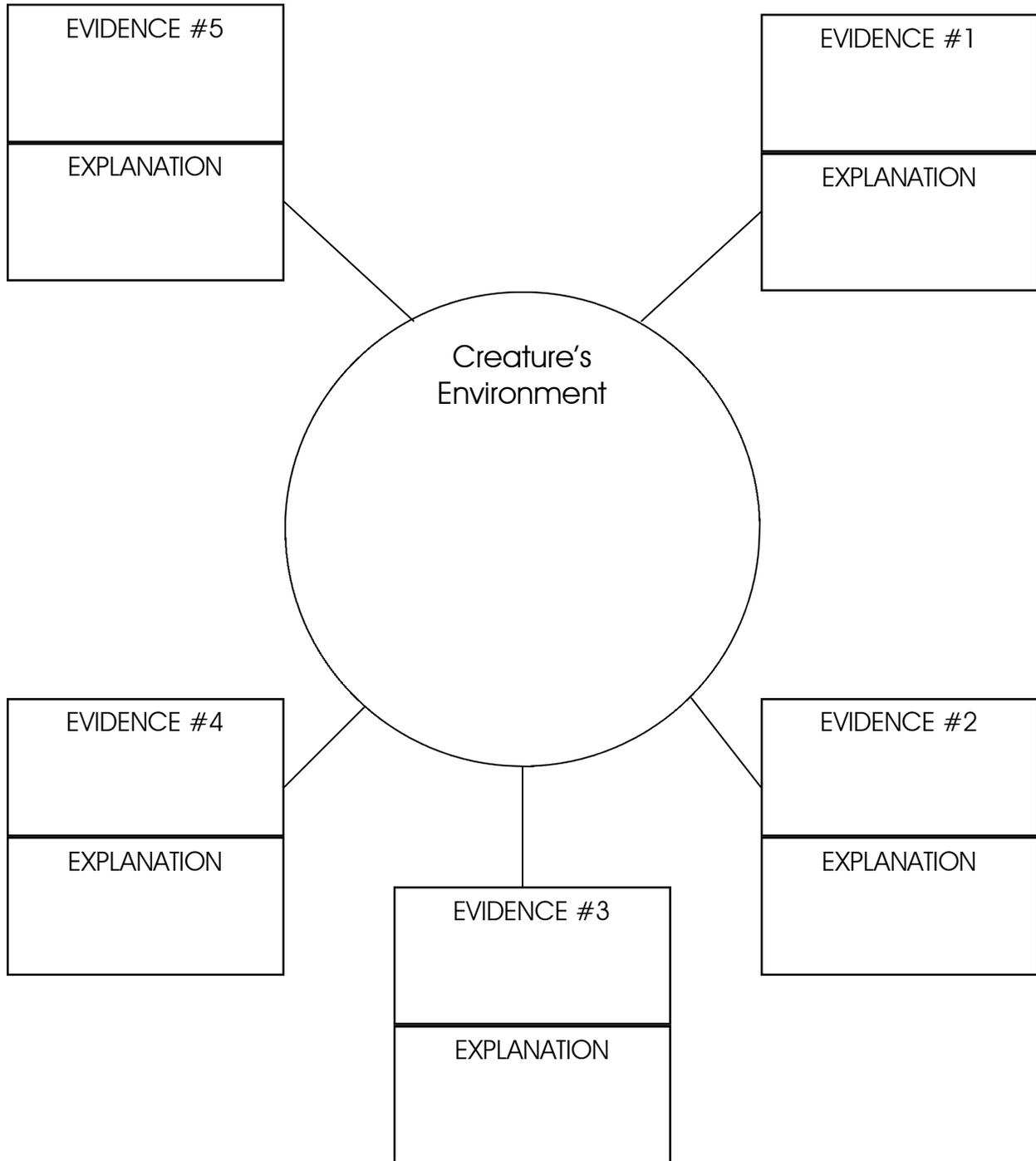
The purpose is for you to use your knowledge of science and writing skills to convince other scientists of your opinion.

## PROCEDURE

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# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



*Note: We have defined environment to mean both living (biotic) and nonliving (abiotic) elements.*

# SCIENCE FICTION CREATURE FEATURE ASSESSMENT LIST

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>Earned</i>
1. A clear opinion has been stated as to the natural habitat of the creature.	10	_____	_____
2. At least five pieces of evidence are stated to substantiate the opinion.	20	_____	_____
3. The relevance and importance of each piece of evidence is explained.	20	_____	_____
4. An explanation is made as to how all the pieces of evidence "add up" to supporting the identification of the probable natural "home" of the alien.	10	_____	_____
5. Relevant personal experiences and previous learning is brought in to provide support.	10	_____	_____
6. Labeled drawings are used to help present the evidence.	5	_____	_____
7. Scientific words, when used, are explained.	5	_____	_____
8. The writing, through its vocabulary, examples, and tone, is written as a paper from a scientist to other scientists.	5	_____	_____
9. The mechanics of English are used correctly.	5	_____	_____
10. The work is neat and presentable.	5	_____	_____
11. The work is completed on time.	5	_____	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	_____	_____