

Homework 5: A Natural History Note

Objective: Create a **one-page** “Natural History Note” on a dinosaur *from the clades we’ve studied* (Saurischia—excluding Theropoda—and Ornithischia). This note should provide a comprehensive overview of the dinosaur, including its physical characteristics, diet, habitat, evolutionary relationships, and any other notable features. An example is shown on the next page - you are not allowed to copy the example...

Instructions:

1. **Selection:**

- Choose your favorite dinosaur from the Saurischia (excluding Theropoda) or Ornithischia clades covered so far.

2. **Research:**

- Gather information on your selected dinosaur from the course materials. If necessary, you can supplement with reputable sources like scientific journals, museum websites, or educational institutions.

3. **Content to Include:**

- **Name and Meaning:** The dinosaur’s name and the meaning of its name.
- **Physical Characteristics:** Size, weight, distinctive physical features (like horns, plates, feathers).
- **Diet:** What it ate and any known feeding behaviors.
- **Habitat:** The environment it lived in (forest, desert, coastal, etc.).
- **Evolutionary Relationships:** Its place within either the Saurischia (excluding Theropoda) or Ornithischia clade and any key evolutionary traits.
- **Temporal Range:** The period or epochs during which it lived.
- **Interesting Facts:** Any unique behaviors, paleontological discoveries, or roles in its ecosystem.

4. **Presentation:**

- Your Natural History Note can include drawings, diagrams, or bullet points—whatever best conveys the information. Make organized and easy to read.

Submission: Submit your Natural History Note on Catcourses. One page max, PDF format.

Grading Criteria: - Completeness and accuracy of the information provided. - Clarity and organization of the presentation. - Creativity/Clarity in the layout and how information is visually represented.

Example Assignment: A Natural History Note - Stegosaurus

Name and Meaning: Stegosaurus, meaning “roof lizard” or “covered lizard” due to its distinctive back plates.

Physical Characteristics: - Length: Up to 9 meters (30 feet). - Weight: Approximately 5,000 kilograms (5.5 tons). - Notable features include a double row of large, bony plates along its back and spiked tail (thagomizer) used for defense.

Diet: Herbivorous, feeding on low-lying plants. Evidence suggests it might not have been able to chew its food thoroughly.

Habitat: Lived in what is now North America, in semi-arid, open environments with seasonal droughts.

Evolutionary Relationships: Part of the Thyreophora subgroup within the Ornithischia clade, showcasing significant developments in dinosaur defense mechanisms.

Temporal Range: Late Jurassic Period, about 155 to 150 million years ago.

Interesting Facts: - The function of its plates has been debated; they may have been used for thermoregulation, defense, or display. - Recent studies suggest the plates had blood vessels, supporting the thermoregulation theory. - The spiked tail (thagomizer) was likely a defensive tool against predators.

Note - your natural history note should include other details and/or diagrams/images/etc, but should be limited to one page.