

Create-An-Organism Instructions

Purpose: To determine how a paleontologist can use fossils to determine what past life forms might have looked like.

Scenario: You are a paleontologist that has just discovered the fossils of a completely new organism. Your job is to put the fossils together to show the complete (or as complete as you can) skeleton and then use other clues to determine what your organism was like. You are using your imagination, but your drawings must be reasonable.

Procedure:

Complete Skeleton:

1. Draw bones from each of the bags your teacher provides. You will either get a picture of your fossil or a blank piece of paper. If the paper is blank, then those fossils could not be found and you must use your imagination.
2. Cut out your bones and organize them into what you think the skeleton should look like. Keep in mind that the parts must go in the correct place (i.e. the tail cannot be coming out of its head).
3. Paste your pieces to your paper to form your organism's skeleton. For the blank pieces, draw the bones in to complete the skeleton.

Sketch Organism:

1. Use your skeleton and to sketch what your organism looked like (you decide if it flew, swam, walked on land, had feathers, etc).
2. Color your sketch based on what you think its surroundings were. Things to consider:
 - a. Where does your organism live and how does it survive?
 - b. Does your organism need to blend into the environment?
 - c. Does your organism use color to warn predators?
3. Sketch your organism's surroundings.

Describe Organism: On your own paper.

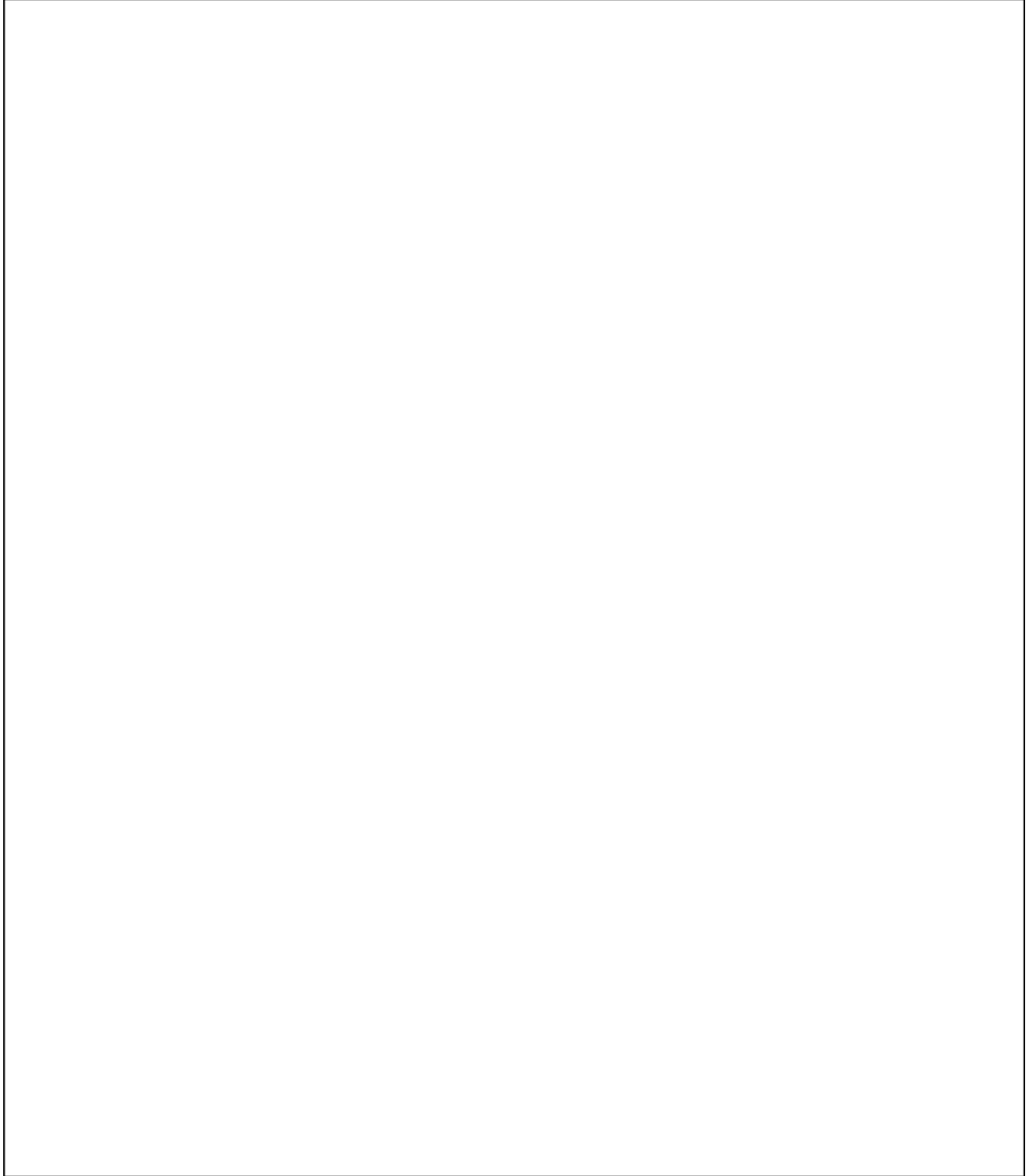
1. Name your organism. Organisms have a two-part name; like *Homo sapiens*.
2. Describe your organism based on its skeleton. How did it get around? What did it eat? Is there anything really interesting about your skeleton?
3. Describe your organisms' surroundings based on what was "found" around its skeleton (you are making this part up). Consider what kind of plant evidence has been found, other organisms nearby, or anything else that might be useful for a paleontologist. Keep in mind; records are rarely complete.

Name _____ Teacher _____
Subject _____ Date _____

Create-An-Organism

Purpose: _____

Skeleton:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing a skeleton. The box is positioned below the 'Skeleton:' label and occupies most of the lower half of the page.

Sketch:

