

Instructions for writing your abstract for the Natural History report

Abstracts are due in section on March 7

Final Paper is due in section on April 25th - more details to follow

I want you to briefly outline an idea that interests you about paleo-ecology. This could involve dinosaurs, life before the dinosaurs, or even life after the dinosaurs. An example idea is shown below. Please follow the format, and note that you cannot use the example idea for your abstract. Once your abstract is approved, you will be writing a 3-4 page paper on the topic, so make sure that it is something that you find appealing!

Rules

- The topic must concern a paleo-ecological interest
- The topic must deal with real paleo-animals/ecosystems... not movies, tv, etc. However, comparisons between real systems and those in movies, tv, etc *may* be okay if the topic is well thought out.
- The topic must *not* be one that we've covered extensively in class (like the example below). It can certainly dig deeper on something that we've covered briefly, but I don't want you to write a report that is essentially a summary of something that we've already talked about.
- You need to provide *at least* 3 potential references that you will use for the final paper. These 3 references are *not to include your textbook*. You can use your textbook as *one* of the references for the final paper, but I want you to show that you will be investigating topics that stretch **beyond** your textbook.

Example Abstract

Topic idea *Stegosaur plates: for love or war?*

I would like to examine the different possible uses of Thyreophoran plates, particularly within Stegosauria. I will examine the different hypotheses related to whether the plates were used defensively, or primarily to attract mates. I will look at morphological evidence from the plates themselves to examine how they could have been used to communicate between members of their own species, as well as to examine their potential uses as defensive weapons by looking at other predatory dinosaur species that would have occupied similar habitats, and could have been potential stegosaur predators.

References I will use (3 required, not counting your textbook)

1. M.J. Benton. 2000. *Vertebrate Paleontology, 2nd edition*. Blackwell Science.
2. D.B. Weishampel et al. 2004. *The Dinosauria*. University of California Press.
3. A.K. Behrensmeyer. 1992. *Terrestrial Ecosystems Through Time*. University of Chicago Press.