

The Galactic Field Guide: Describing New Life

Writing informative descriptions of fictional creatures

PART 01 Authentic Model Text Analysis

Read the following entry from the 'Intergalactic Explorer's Handbook' and answer the questions below.

Subject: The Gliesean Sand-Stalker

The Gliesean Sand-Stalker is a fascinating, small, six-legged creature that inhabits the copper deserts of Gliese 581g. It has shimmering metallic skin which reflects the planet's twin suns to keep its body cool. Unlike humans, who communicate through speech, Sand-Stalkers use rhythmic vibrations in the ground to share information. In their culture, "silence" (no vibration) is considered a sign of deep respect and mourning. If you encounter one, you should remain perfectly still. They are generally peaceful, but they can be territorial if you step on their underground nests.

1. **Structure:** How is the information organized? (What comes first: physical description or behavior?)
2. **Language:** Find two sentences that use "which" or "who" to give more information.
3. **Cultural Reflection:** The Sand-Stalkers value "silence" differently than some human cultures. In your home culture, what is a specific gesture or behavior that signifies "respect"? How might an alien misunderstand it?

PART 02 Vocabulary Bank

Use the vocabulary and frames below to draft a description of an alien you have "discovered."

Vocabulary Bank:

- **Physical Traits:** Translucent, feathered, bioluminescent, towering, fragile, scaly.
- **Habitat:** Dense jungles, frozen moons, floating cities, volcanic vents.
- **Social Behavior:** Solitary, communal, aggressive, inquisitive, ritualistic.

PART 03 Independent Writing

Create your own alien species. Write a formal 150-word descriptive report for the Galactic Field Guide. Your report must include:

1. A physical description using at least three adjectives in the correct order (e.g., *a large, green, slimy limb*).
2. A description of their home environment.
3. An explanation of one "cultural" habit or social rule they follow.
4. At least two relative clauses (using *who*, *which*, or *that*).

PART 04 Editorial Revision & Peer Review

Exchange your report with a partner. Check for the following:

- ☐ **Adjective Order:** Did the writer use the correct order? (Opinion -> Size -> Age -> Shape -> Color -> Origin -> Material).
- ☐ **Relative Clauses:** Are "who," "which," and "that" used correctly to combine ideas?
- ☐ **Clarity:** Can you visualize the alien clearly?
- ☐ **Cultural Connection:** Is the alien's social rule explained clearly compared to human norms?

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Writing practice worksheet.



TIME

20-30 MINS

OBJECTIVE

Students will write a structured, informative description of a fictional creature using correct adjective order and relative clauses.



GRAMMAR FOCUS

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- Adjective Order and Relative Clauses

KEY VOCABULARY

TRANSLUCENT FEATHERED
BIOLUMINESCENT TOWERING
FRAGILE SCALY DENSE JUNGLES
FROZEN MOONS FLOATING CITIES
VOLCANIC VENTS SOLITARY
COMMUNAL AGGRESSIVE
INQUISITIVE

Procedure

1. Deconstruction (15 mins):

- Read the model text aloud.
- Discuss the "Cultural Reflection" question in small groups. This allows students to share their own cultural norms (e.g., eye contact, personal space) in a low-stakes, creative context.
- Identify the grammar: Highlight "six-legged creature" and "metallic skin."

2. Joint Construction / Imitation (20 mins):

- Using the sentence frames, build a "class alien" on the board.
- Review adjective order: Provide a "Royal Order of Adjectives" chart if students struggle.
- Practice combining sentences: "The alien has wings. The wings glow in the dark." -> "The alien has wings *which* glow in the dark."

3. Independent Construction (25 mins):

- Students draft their reports.
- Encourage them to draw their alien first if they are visual learners; this helps them generate more specific descriptive adjectives.
- Circulate and prompt students to expand on the "why" behind their alien's behavior to ensure they use relative clauses.