

*Thank you*

FOR YOUR  
INTEREST IN  
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *Write From the Beginning*, Grades K-5.

[LEARN MORE](#) about this title!



## I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW . . .

Recently when I was teaching one of my doctoral classes, one of my students (who is a teacher) mentioned something about her elementary school's mascot being the koala. Before anyone could say anything, another teacher piped up and said, "Fun fact about koalas. Did you know that eucalyptus is toxic and koalas often have diarrhea from eating this plant?" Of course, no one knew this, and we were surprised to hear some new and random information about koalas. This lesson focuses on something similar because in this writing, students research a topic, figure, character, or event and write about a little-known fact.

**Focus Genre:** Informational

**Target Grade Level:** K–2

### Standards

Develop a topic with facts, definitions, or details.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information.

Recall key details from a text.

### Anchor Texts

*Don't Believe It: Facts and Fibs About Animals* by Melvin Berger

*Learn With Facts* series by Isis Gaillard

*Give Bees a Chance* by Bethany Barton

*Shark Lady: The True Story of How Eugenie Clark Became the Ocean's Most Fearless Scientist* by Jess Keating

*Gregor Mendel: The Friar Who Grew Peas* by Cheryl Bardoe

*The Crayon Man: The True Story of the Invention of Crayola Crayons* by Natascha Biebow

### Materials

- Sticky notes
- Chart paper
- Paint strips
- Notecards
- I Bet You Didn't Know . . . template (p. 248)

## Teach It

1. Begin by reading a couple of pages from one of the anchor texts. I suggest starting with the *Don't Believe It: Facts and Fibs About Animals* by Melvin Berger.
2. Have students brainstorm a list of animals (or other topic the class is interested in) they might want to research.
3. Discuss where you might look to find information about the topic. Suggestions might include other books, videos, the internet, etc.
4. Together as a class, practice finding one new or random fact about an animal on the class list.
5. After you have located a new fact about one of the animals on the class list, have students work with a partner to choose a new animal to research.
6. Using digital or print sources have students locate one new fact about their animal.
7. Record this new fact on the I Bet You Didn't Know . . . template (p. 248).

### Quick Tip!

Because this book is laid out in a one-page format, it works best if students have heard a few samples from the book before. In fact, you might think about using it as a read aloud for several days prior so students get used to the text and the overall structure.

## Try It

- Use this as a way to get students to collect different facts about an animal or idea or concept.
- Try this when you want students to practice research in an unimposing setting.
- Use this as a quick way to incorporate the research and informational genre into teaching.

## Extensions

- Use this as a review game and have students quiz the class by having them guess their animal or topic they researched.
- Incorporate another one of the anchor texts and have students choose a new topic or concept to locate facts.
- Connect this to the Textual Evidence Scavenger Hunt (p. 113) by having students look for specific facts about an animal or concept.
- Instead of finding just one fact, have students connect this to the Top Ten Lists (p. 117) and locate multiple facts.

- Connect this to *Two Truths and Lie* (Harper, 2021).
- Compile all the different facts into a class book about different animals or other topics.

## Modifications

### Emerging Writers

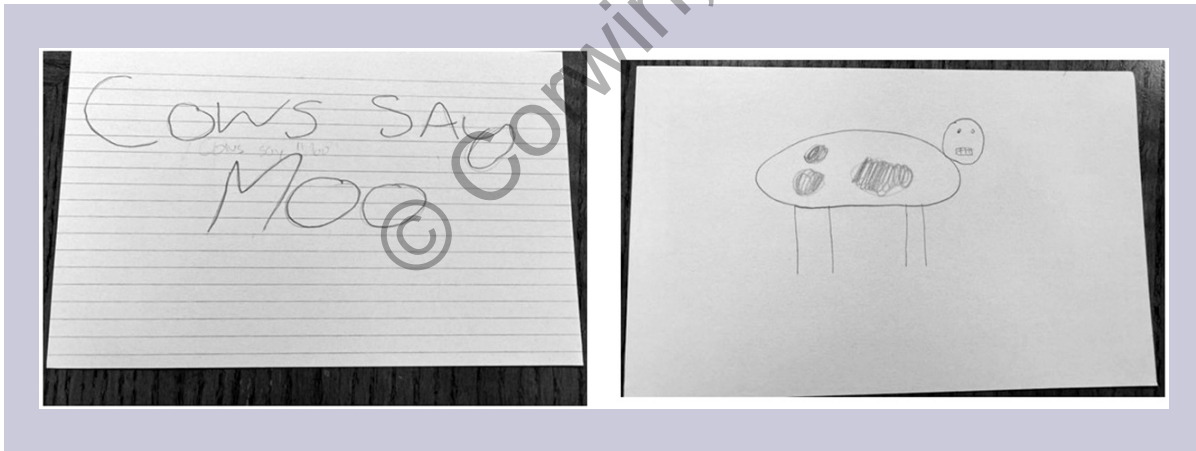
- Instead of having students come up with their own animals to research, have a list made ahead of time for them to choose from.

### Quick Tip!

Plan ahead and use the leftover animal crackers for the *Who Would Win?* lesson (p. 142) or the *Animal Problems* lesson (p. 109).

- Have students draw a picture of their animal or concept or item or use a photograph or image and then have them affix address labels or post its to the picture with facts describing it.
- Use animal crackers as a way for students to select their research animals.

- Have students draw a picture of their animal on a notecard and record their fact on the back of the card.



### Proficient Writers

- Use these interesting facts as a way to hook a reader when writing an extended composition.
- Have students start a larger research writing engagement with this lesson and build on it to create an extended writing.
- Have students continue their research with the *Label This!* strategy (p. 130).
- Use paint strips to record multiple facts on their animals.

## See It Sample

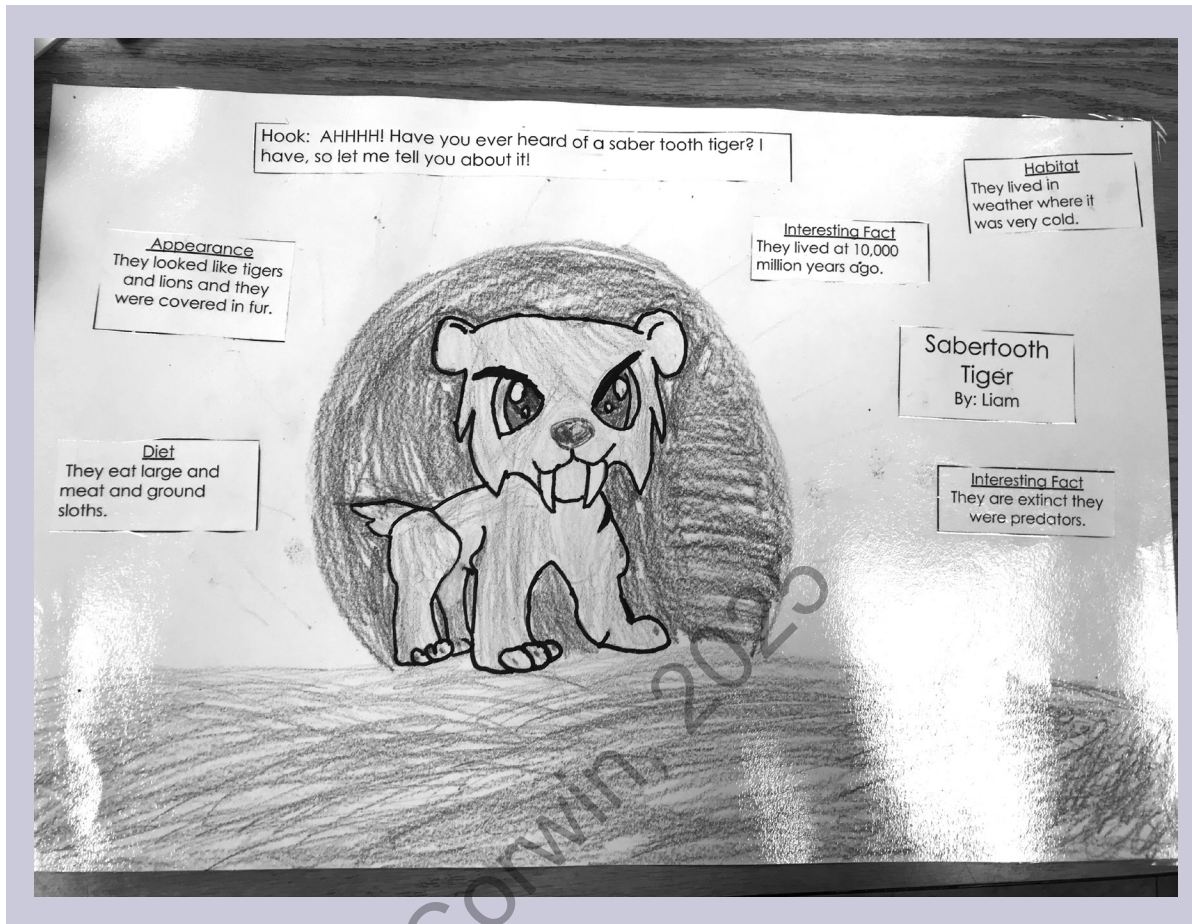


Photo by Alfred Cain