

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



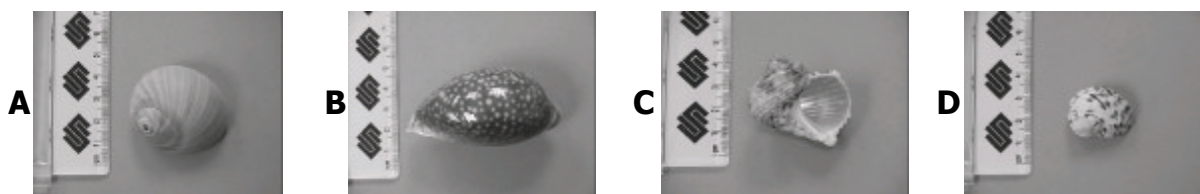
# Descriptive Essay Instruction Sheet & Characteristic Record Observation

Below you will find a short, descriptive essay on *Polinices duplicatus*. This is just an example of how a descriptive essay could appear.

The shell's scientific name is *Polinices duplicatus*. It can be commonly found in the shallow waters of Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. This particular shell was once the home and a source of protection of a snail. It belongs to the mollusk class gastropoda. It is also a univalve, which means that the shell consists of a single valve or piece.

The size of this shell is 3.5 cm long and 4 cm wide. It weighs 22 grams. The shell is round, and has an array of colors that include shades of brown, very light purple, orange and tan. It has a very smooth texture. This shell is right-handed, which means its shell coils to the right. It has a hollow interior and the bottom of the shell is white with one round brown spot.

Can you figure out which shell I just finished describing?



The example above is a style of writing called technical or descriptive writing. Descriptive writing is "writing that paints a colorful picture of a person, a place, a thing, or an idea using concrete, vivid details." To write effectively, you should keep some things in mind. The use of details and the organization of these details into significant patterns are great descriptive techniques. In the example above, details such as quantitative and qualitative descriptions help the reader select the right shell.

In the tables below fill in the following quantitative and qualitative characteristic of your shell.

## I. Quantitative

	Left Valve	Right Valve
Weight		
Size: Length		
Size: Width		

## II. Qualitative

	Left Valve	Right Valve
Color		
Texture		
Unusual Features		

Other important descriptive information:

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### OPTION 1:

In this activity you will select an oyster shell and then write a descriptive essay modeled after the essay above. When you are finished writing, bring both the essay and the shell to the teacher. In the second part of this activity, your teacher will return your essay to you. You should also be able to distinguish your shell from the others just by reading your description. If you cannot, you will be asked to rewrite the descriptive essay for clarification of details.

### OPTION 2:

In this activity you will select an oyster shell and then write a descriptive essay modeled after the essay above. When you are finished writing, bring both the essay and the shell to the teacher. In the second part of this activity, your shell will be put into a pile for identification, and another student will identify it by reading your essay.