



# Movies & Monsters: Creature Design

A single lesson, cross-curriculum Curiosity Pack for Year 8

## At a Glance

**Topic:** Aircraft Systems & Flight

**Age Level:** Year 8

**Session Length:** 45–60 minutes

Pathfinders will:

- investigate how movie creatures and monsters are designed
- explore how features help creatures survive in fictional worlds
- examine how artists use real animals and nature for inspiration
- identify features that communicate personality, abilities, and behaviour
- create a Creature Design Project

## Lesson Overview

This Curiosity Pack introduces Pathfinders to the creative process of designing creatures and monsters for movies.

Learners investigate how filmmakers, artists, and designers create creatures that look believable, interesting, and suited to their worlds. They explore how real animals, environments, science, and imagination can inspire fictional creatures.

Pathfinders examine examples of creature design and investigate how features such as body shape, movement, size, colour, habitat, and special abilities help communicate information about a creature.

The lesson combines visual arts, media arts, science, literacy, design thinking, observation, and creativity through investigation, analysis, and project creation.

This learning experience supports:

- observation and questioning
- creative thinking
- visual communication
- scientific observation
- design thinking
- comparison and analysis
- imagination and innovation

The lesson is designed using inclusive learning principles, supporting diverse learning needs through:

- self-paced learning



- visual supports
- flexible activity choices
- hands-on exploration
- multiple ways to show learning

## **Session Length**

**Total learning time:** 45–60 minutes

Pathfinders may:

- ✓ complete the lesson in one session
- ✓ pause and return later
- ✓ spend longer on favourite activities
- ✓ simplify or extend the task

## **Learning Focus**

This Curiosity Pack explores:

- creature design
- monster creation
- movie production
- adaptations and features
- visual communication
- storytelling
- design thinking

Learners will:

- ✓ investigate movie creature design
- ✓ identify features used in creature creation
- ✓ explain how features communicate information about a creature
- ✓ compare different creature designs
- ✓ organise ideas visually
- ✓ communicate discoveries through drawing, writing, discussion, or design
- ✓ create a Creature Design Project

## **Success Looks Like**

Success may look different for each Pathfinder.

Examples may include:

- ✓ identifying features of movie creatures
- ✓ explaining why a creature was designed a certain way
- ✓ recording observations about creature designs



- ✓ creating a labelled drawing
- ✓ comparing different creatures
- ✓ designing an original creature
- ✓ sharing discoveries in a way that works for them

Exploring, noticing, investigating, and creating are all part of success.

## **Materials**

You may want:

- paper or workbook
- pencils and coloured pencils
- ruler
- books or websites about creatures and animals
- creature images
- notebook or worksheet
- scissors
- glue

Optional:

- tablet or computer
- printer
- poster paper
- modelling clay
- LEGO or construction materials
- digital drawing tools

## **Suggested Learning Resources**

### **National Geographic Kids – Animals**

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com>

Explore animal features, habitats, adaptations and behaviours that can inspire creature designs.

### **Pixar in a Box – Character Design**

<https://www.khanacademy.org/computing/pixar>

Learn how artists and designers create characters and creatures for animation and film.

### **Crash Course Kids – Adaptations and Habitats**

<https://www.youtube.com/@crashcoursekids>

Videos exploring how animals survive and adapt to different environments.





### **Storyboard That**

<https://www.storyboardthat.com>



### **Online Safety Reminder**

When exploring online, remember:

-  Ask an adult first
  -  Use trusted learning websites
  -  Keep personal information private
  -  Tell an adult if something feels wrong
- Stay curious and stay safe.

Create visual character concepts, storyboards, and creature ideas.

## **Universal Design for Learning Supports**

This Curiosity Pack supports different ways of learning by providing flexible choices for engagement, learning, and expression.

### **Multiple ways to engage**

Learners can:

- choose which creatures to investigate
- focus on one design feature or many features
- take movement or sensory breaks
- work independently or with support
- compare different creature types
- connect ideas to movies, art, animals, or storytelling interests

### **Multiple ways to learn**

Learners can:

- read facts
- watch short videos
- explore creature images
- examine drawings and concept art
- compare creature features
- discuss discoveries

### **Multiple ways to show learning**

Learners can:

- draw and label
- write notes
- create a poster
- build a model
- explain ideas verbally
- create digitally
- make comparison charts





## **Movies & Monsters: Creature Design**

### **Pathfinder Guide**

Welcome Pathfinder!



Pathfinders explore how designers create creatures and monsters for movies, animation, and storytelling.

Creature designers often combine ideas from animals, habitats, science, imagination, and art. Every feature is chosen for a reason. A creature's eyes, claws, wings, colour, shape, movement, and habitat can tell audiences something about how it lives and behaves.





Designers think carefully about what a creature can do, where it lives, how it survives, and how it fits into a story.

Looking closely at creature design can help Pathfinders understand how creativity, observation, science, and storytelling work together.


During this Pathfinder Journey, Pathfinders may:


-  explore creature designs
-  investigate animal adaptations
-  examine how features communicate information
-  compare different creatures
-  create a Creature Design Project

Ideas may be shown in many ways:

-  drawing
-  writing notes
-  creating charts
-  designing



 creating digitally

 explaining ideas aloud

Activities may be completed in order or Pathfinders may begin with the part that feels most interesting.

Taking breaks, noticing patterns, asking questions, and making discoveries are all part of the Pathfinder Journey.


## **Pathfinder Investigation**


Pathfinders sometimes notice that movie monsters and creatures often borrow ideas from real animals.


Designers study animals, habitats, movement, colours, textures, and survival features to help create believable creatures.

Every feature tells the audience something.

Examples of creature features include:

 eyes → help the creature see


 teeth → help the creature eat or defend itself

 wings → help the creature fly


 scales → provide protection

 claws → help with climbing, hunting, or digging


 body shape → supports movement and survival

 colours and patterns → help communication or camouflage

Each feature helps tell the creature's story.


 Some Pathfinders investigate by:

- looking at creature pictures
- examining concept art
- comparing creatures and animals
- reading creature facts
- watching short videos
- discussing creature designs

 Pathfinders may investigate:


- What features does this creature have?
- Which real animals might have inspired it?
- Where might this creature live?
- How might it move?
- What might it eat?
- Which features help it survive?
- What story does the creature communicate?



 When Pathfinders investigate, they sometimes keep track of what they discover.

Ideas may be recorded by:

- drawing creatures
- labelling features
- writing notes
- creating feature cards
- making comparison charts
- recording interesting discoveries

 Some Pathfinders may compare:

- creatures and real animals
- flying and non-flying creatures
- land and water creatures
- large and small creatures
- different survival features

Looking closely at similarities and differences can help Pathfinders understand how creature designers use real-world ideas to create fictional creatures.


## **Pathfinder Studio**


Pathfinders now bring their discoveries together.

Creature designers often create concept drawings and design plans before creatures appear in movies.

In this activity, Pathfinders create an original movie creature.

Some Pathfinders choose to focus on:

 a monster

 a flying creature

 a water creature

 a creature from an extreme environment

 a creature inspired by a real animal








Or another creature idea that interests them.

 Before creating, Pathfinders may think about:








- Where does the creature live?
- What does it eat?
- How does it move?
- What special abilities does it have?
- Which features help it survive?
- How can I show my ideas clearly?

You may create:



-  a poster
-  a fact page
-  a creature profile
-  a model
-  a digital design
-  a labelled diagram
-  a mini booklet

You may include:

-  creature name
-  habitat
-  features
-  abilities
-  explanations
-  drawings
-  interesting facts





As you create, you may notice new connections between animals, environments, storytelling, and design.

There is no single correct way to create.

Different Pathfinders may choose different ways to share their discoveries.

## Reflection

How did this Curiosity Pack feel?

-  Loved it
-  Interesting
-  Okay
-  Challenging

Pathfinders may think about:

- Which creature design was most interesting?
- What surprised you about creature creation?
- What feature would you most like to use in your own creature?
- What did you discover about animals and adaptations?
- Which activity did you enjoy most?

You may reflect by:

- talking
- drawing
- writing



- building
- recording a short explanation

