**Student Worksheet: Present day dinos**

**Directions**: Read the introduction and the section “Some reptiles became birds” in the *Science News Explores* explainer “[What is a dinosaur?](https://www.snexplores.org/article/what-is-a-dinosaur)” Then answer the questions in the “What is a dinosaur?” section as instructed by your teacher.

With your group, choose one of the four sections from the *Science News Explores* article “[Dinosaurs are still alive. Today, we call them birds](https://www.snexplores.org/article/birds-living-dinosaurs).” Choose between the sections: “The first bird,” “Not your typical dinosaur,” “Ruffling feathers,” or “Snoozing dinos.” Each of these sections focuses on a different fossil that scientists have used as evidence of the evolutionary link between birds and dinosaurs. Within your group, answer the questions below in the “Choose your own dinosaur” segment. Then create a short presentation to share with your class.

**What is a dinosaur?**

1. Describe how the system of classifying animals has changed. How does the system used today help scientists better understand the connection between dinosaurs and birds?

2. What is your reaction to the idea that birds descend from dinosaurs? Would you have expected the two species to be related?

3. What additional questions do you still have about the evolution of birds or dinosaurs?

**Choose your own dinosaur**

1. Which section did you read? What is the name of the dinosaur highlighted in it? Where and when was the fossil discovered?

2. List all the traits of the dinosaur described in the article. Using this list, draw a picture of the dinosaur as it may have looked while it was alive. Include in your visual all of the traits highlighted in the article.

3. Name the behavior(s) or trait(s) of the dinosaur that can be compared to a bird. What did the behavior(s) or trait(s) allow the dinosaur to do? Explain which traits were like modern birds and which were unlike modern birds.

4. In your own words, explain how the discovery of the fossil helped or hindered scientists’ theories about an evolutionary relationship between birds and dinosaurs.

5. Find an example of a modern bird that exhibits a similar behavior or trait as the dinosaur fossil. How are the traits or behaviors similar or different?