

Invertebrate Paleontology

First Essay Assignment

September 4, 2018

(Due in your Dropbox Folder as a Word document on Thursday, September 13th, at 7:30 a.m.)

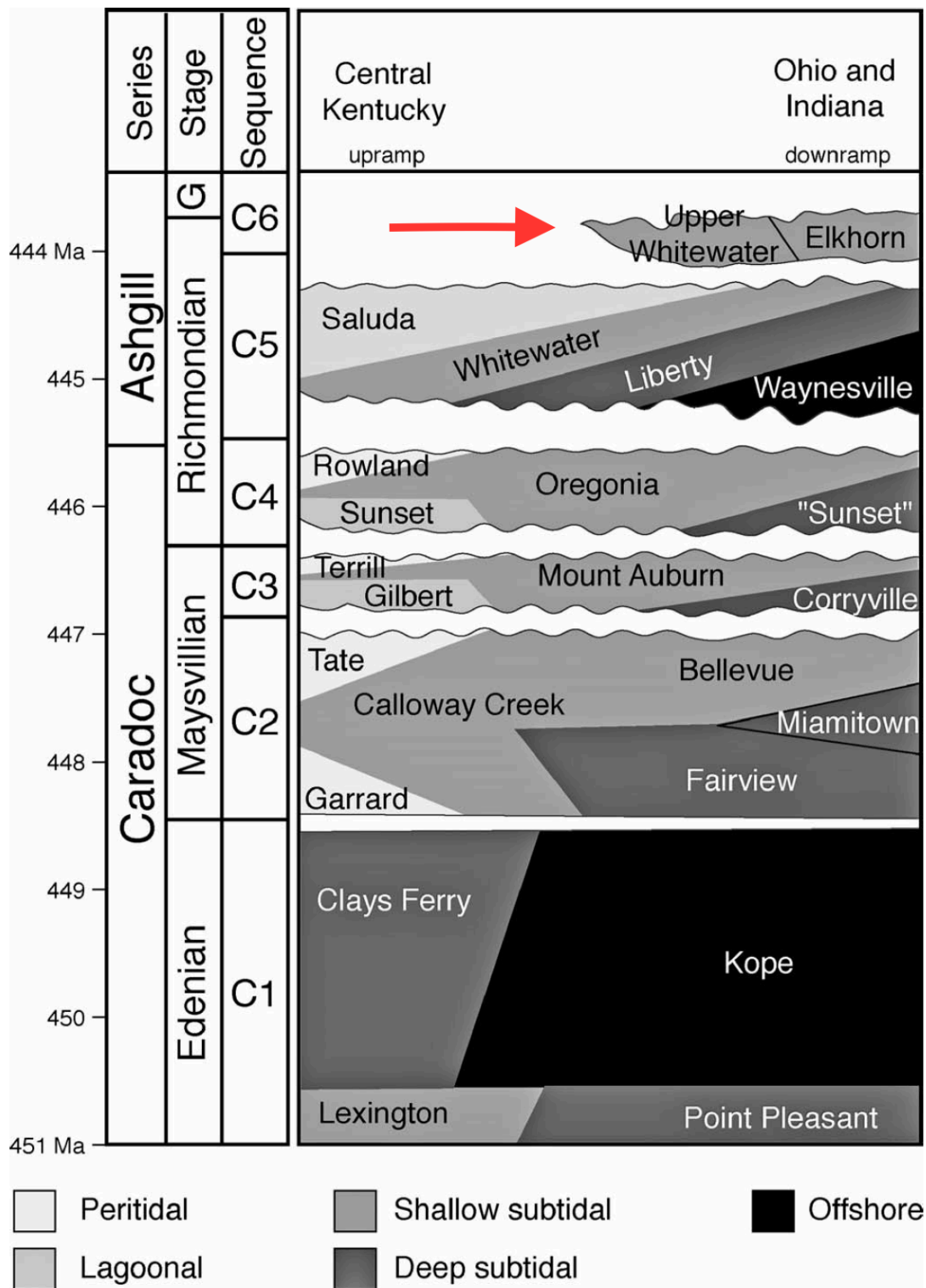
One of the requirements in this writing course is the completion of two short paleontological essays. This is your first assignment.

The task: Please write an essay designed for a science newsletter or blog describing your field trip experience, which we hope to have on Sunday, September 9. Here are the parameters –

1. The description should include the **usual information**, like date, place, people involved, methods, etc. For this you are like a reporter.
2. Your account should also detail the **purpose** of a field trip like this, along with the following lab work. Why do paleontologists collect fossils? What useful information may these particular fossils reveal? For this you are a scientist.
3. Please say something about the **geological context**, including the name of the formation, its age, and its likely depositional environment. There are big clues on the back of this page.
4. For this essay **no references** are required. We'll do plenty of citations later in your field reports.
5. At least **two photographs** are required in your essay. These must be taken by you in the field. I'm assuming you all have cameras on your phones or access to cameras. Alexis is willing to let you borrow her phone camera if you need it.
6. This essay cannot exceed 1000 words. Ideally it will be between 800 and 1000 words in length, including figure captions. This whole document, for example, is 443 words.
7. The format of your document is up to you, as is the style and tone. This is a chance for creative scientific writing. Give yourself enough time to be brilliant.

Evaluation: Your article will be graded on its accessibility to an educated public, creativity (is it something we will want to read? do we learn from it?), and technical production (spelling and grammatical errors should simply not occur, so give yourself time to closely review drafts).

This article is due in your Dropbox folder as a Word document (not pdf or other format) by 7:30 a.m. on **Thursday, September 13th**. I will comment on it and you will have an opportunity to rewrite it. Your final grade will be the average of your first submission and your final version. If you wish you can complete the paper early and ask for an early first grading. *Late papers will not be accepted.*



From: Holland, S.M., and Patzkowsky, M.E., 2007, Gradient ecology of a biotic invasion: biofacies of the type Cincinnati Series (Upper Ordovician), Cincinnati, Ohio region, USA: *Palaaios*, v. 22, p. 392-407.