

The Handwriting Is in the Log

Griffie's Feeding Log

Date	Time	Comments	Name
Monday, Sept. 10	3:30	HE DIDN'T EAT MUCH TODAY.	MARIA
Tuesday, Sept. 11	3:45	I played with him for awhile.	Jen
Wednesday, Sept. 12	4:00	He was happy to see me!	Jeff
Thursday, Sept. 13	3:50	I cleaned his cage today.	LaShaun
Friday, Sept. 14	3:45	He was asleep when I was here.	

The kids on Griffie's September care team have all filled in entries on the log, but the last entry isn't signed. Since we have a handwriting sample from each team member, maybe we can find out who was the last person to see Griffie by comparing the writing for September 14 to see if it matches one of the other entries.

Handwriting analysis is based on the fact that every person in the world has a unique way of writing. It's a very methodical process that examines the way people form letters and the unique characteristics of those letters. Some of the things that handwriting analysts focus on include:

- The slant of the letters
- The way loop letters (e, f, and g, for example) are formed
- The way the i is dotted and the t is crossed
- Height ratios (the height of the letter t compared to the h, c, or l, for example)
- Alignment to baseline (whether the writing slants upward, downward, or curves)
- Movement (how the letters are, or are not, connected)

Keeping these factors in mind, look at the four samples on the feeding log and write a short description of each student's handwriting above right.

Maria _____
 Jen _____
 Jeff _____
 LaShaun _____

Now describe the last, unsigned entry.

Based on your analysis, who do you think was the last person to feed Griffie?

This will be the first person that Ms. Mendoza talks to about Griffie—who, by the way, just came out of the supply closet. He seems a little hungry and thirsty, but otherwise he's just fine!

Before you turn this sheet upside down to read what Ms. Mendoza learned, what does your team think might have happened? How did Griffie get out of his cage? Be prepared to share your thoughts with the class.

When Ms. Mendoza questioned Jeff, who—based on the handwriting analysis—was the last student to feed Griffie, he admitted that, after he opened the cage door, something going on outside the classroom window had distracted him. When he turned around, Griffie was gone. He looked all over the room, but when he couldn't find him, he left. He was too embarrassed to tell anyone what he did. He worried about Griffie all weekend, which probably was punishment enough for being so careless!

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