Variable Oystercatchers II

This task is about understanding the language features used in a science report.

The text below is a science text that gives information about variable oystercatchers. Science texts that give information about groups of things, e.g., birds, clouds, stars, diesel engines, liquids are usually called "science reports". Science reports have particular text features.

Variable Oystercatchers | Tōrea pango

Variable oystercatchers are wading birds that are native to New Zealand. They are stocky with red-orange eye-rings, long red bills, pink legs, and vary in colour from black and white to pure black. They nest in the sand above the high tide line.

Because they nest on the ground their eggs and young are likely to be eaten by predators. Variable oystercatchers do several things to protect their young. If a predator appears they often run away from where the nest is. The predator usually follows and so is led away from the nest. If this does not work they will often become aggressive, squawking loudly and dive-bombing the predator. If this is also unsuccessful they will usually start flapping around on the ground. The predator is then likely to chase the adult bird, which appears to be injured, rather than go after the young.

Read the "Variable Oystercatchers" science report.
Look for examples in "Variable Oystercatchers"of the following text features.

a)**Text feature: *An opening general statement.***
  What is an "opening general statement"? Usually 1-3 sentences at the beginning of the text that introduces what is being written about. The general opening statement will be followed by specific statements. In the examples below, the opening general statement is written in italics.
  Examples: Cicadas are insects. They live all over the world except very cold areas. New Zealand has 38 species of cicada…
  Potatoes are native to Peru and were taken to Europe about 600 years ago. They are now the world's most widely grown vegetable. The Agria variety is floury so is best suited to roasting and chips…

  Find the opening general statement:

  _____

  _____

  _____

b) **Text Feature: _Meaning is built up step by step._**
   How is meaning built up step by step? One piece of information is given, then more information on the same topic is added so the reader can gradually build an understanding.
   Example: First, the writer tells us: "Kiwi mostly eat seeds, grubs, worms". The writer adds information about how kiwi find grubs and worms by telling us: "They don't need to see, feel, or hear food that lives underground. Instead, they smell it with the nostrils at the end of their long beak."

   Starting at the end of line four it says, "Variable oystercatchers do various things to protect their young."

   Find two examples of information that adds to this:

   _____

   _____

   _____

c) **Text feature: _Language for classifying_.**
   What is "classifying" language? Language that tells which group/s something is part of.
   Examples:

   - A fireball is a very bright meteor.
   - Katipo belong to the same group of spiders as the Australian redback.
   - Kiwi are flightless birds.
   - Kakapo are native to New Zealand.

   Find two examples of language that classifies variable oystercatchers:

   _____

   _____

   _____

d) **Text feature: *Technical language*.**
What is "technical" language? Technical language is used when we talk or write about particular topics. It is not used much in our everyday lives.
Examples: Hector's dolphin, Maui's dolphin, dorsal fin, flippers, marine mammal, carnivore, Department of Conservation (technical language to do with dolphins).

Find four examples of technical language:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

e) **Text feature: *Language that describes what a group of things look like or what they have*.**
Which kind of descriptive language? Not imaginative words, only ones to do with facts.
Examples:

- Most species of whale have a dorsal fin on their back.
- The adult black stilt is greenish black.
- Fixed wing aircraft have a pair of long, narrow, flat, nearly horizontal wings.
- Sharks have several rows of teeth which grow, and are replaced, throughout their lives.

Find four examples of language that describes what variable oystercatchers look like or what they have:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

f) **Text feature: *Language that describes what a group of things do.***
Which kind of descriptive language? Not imaginative words, only ones to do with facts.
Examples:

- Female whales give birth to a single calf.
- Black stilts feed on aquatic invertebrates, molluscs, and fish.

Find two examples of language that describes what variable oystercatchers do:

1. _____

2. _____

g) **Text feature: *The things being written about are a group. They are not individuals; they are not characters.***
Which kinds of words tell this? Usually one or two words that tell the name of the group.
Examples:Ants (a group).
[**Not:** That ant over there (an individual). **Not**: Charlie ant (a character)].
Find the main group being written about:

_____

_____

h) **Text feature: *Timeless language.***
What is "timeless" language? When what is written is not linked to any particular time.
Example: Cats eat meat (timeless).
[**Not:** The cats ate the meat (this happened in the past).**Not:** The cats are eating the meat (this is happening right now)].
Find one example of timeless language:

_____

_____

i) **Text feature: *Objective language.***
What does "objective" mean? Fair, impartial. Not emotional. When a writer uses objective language they don't tell us how they personally feel about the topic. They just give us the facts.
Example: Bloodworms kill their prey by injecting poison through their fangs.
[**Not:** Blood worms are ugly, brutal killers. **Not:** Bloodworms must be wiped off the planet!
Not: Who do they think they are calling bloodworms "ugly"?]
Find one example of objective language:

_____

_____