

Amazing Amphibians

The class **Amphibia** is made up of three types of animals:

- a) **salamanders**
- b) **frogs**
- c) **caecilians.**

Amphibians are usually found in damp habitats like swamps or rain forests. One reason for this is that most amphibians use their moist skin to carry out gas exchange with the surrounding environment. This is a kind of breathing. Another reason is that because amphibian eggs have no shells, they must be kept moist as well. They would dry out very quickly if they were not deposited in a moist environment. This is why most amphibians lay their eggs in ponds or swamps.

Some types of **salamanders** are aquatic which means they live in the water, but others live on land. Salamanders that live on land usually bend from side to side as they walk along.

Caecilians are the smallest group of amphibians. They have no legs and they are nearly blind. They look a lot like earthworms and, like them, they have a burrowing lifestyle.

Frogs or **Anurans** are the largest group of amphibians. Frogs have many adaptations that allow them to live successfully on land. They have powerful back feet for hopping along the ground and long, sticky tongues for catching insects. Frogs, like some other amphibians, are often camouflaged to protect them from predators. They have glands in their skin that secrete **mucus**. Not only does mucus taste bad, but in some cases it is poisonous as well. Many of the brightly colored frogs found in rainforests are highly poisonous.

Most frogs undergo a **metamorphosis** or change in appearance. They start off as **tadpoles** at the **larval** stage when they have gills and a tail but no legs. Tadpoles cannot survive out of water. During metamorphosis the gills and tail disappear and legs are formed. Young frogs have lungs for breathing and a digestive system equipped for a carnivorous diet. This makes them suited to life on land. Although most frogs were once tadpoles, there are many others that do not go through the tadpole stage. Some amphibians are capable of living entirely in the water and others entirely on land.

Name _____

Date _____

Amazing Amphibians Questions

1. True or False. The class Amphibia consists of two different kinds of animals.
2. Amphibians need to keep their skin moist so they can use it to carry out _____ exchange with the environment.
3. What would happen to amphibian eggs if they were laid in a dry environment?
4. The three groups of amphibians are: salamanders, _____, and _____.
5. Which amphibian group is legless and nearly blind?
 - a. frogs
 - b. salamanders
 - c. caecilians
 - d. tadpoles
6. Frogs are also called _____.
7. True or False. Amphibians are often camouflaged.
8. Frogs that have a larval stage undergo the process of _____.
9. Some frogs have an aquatic larval stage called a _____.
10. Name one feature that frogs have but tadpoles do not have.

Name _____

Date _____

Amazing Amphibians Answers

1. True or **False**. The class Amphibia consists of two different kinds of animals.
2. Amphibians need to keep their skin moist, so they can use it to carry out **gas** exchange with the environment.
3. What would happen to amphibian eggs if they were laid in a dry environment? **They would dry out**
4. The three groups of amphibians are: salamanders, **frogs**, and **caecilians**.
5. Which amphibian group is legless and nearly blind?
 - a. frogs
 - b. salamanders
 - c. caecilians**
 - d. tadpoles
6. Frogs are also called **Anurans**.
7. **True** or False. Amphibians are often camouflaged.
8. Frogs that have a larval stage undergo the process of **metamorphosis**.
9. Some frogs have an aquatic larval stage called a **tadpole**.
10. Name one feature that frogs have which tadpoles do not.
Lungs, or legs, or carnivorous digestive system