

Name _____

Date _____

Learning about Snakes

Reading and Discussion

Do you like snakes? Some people keep snakes as pets but most are afraid of them. Perhaps this is because some snakes are poisonous, though most snakes are harmless. In the USA only coral snakes, copperheads, rattlesnakes and water moccasins are poisonous. Perhaps people don't like snakes because they are very different from us.

Most of the animals we keep as pets are mammals. Like us, mammals are warm-blooded. This means that their bodies stay the same temperature whether it is hot or cold. They use their legs to walk, their ears to hear, their noses to smell, and their tongues to taste.

Snakes are reptiles. They are not cute and fluffy. Instead they have long, thin, **flexible** bodies covered with scales. These scales are made out of the same material as your fingernails. When the outer layer of scales becomes too small, snakes shed it by rubbing their noses against a hard object and then crawling out of their skins.

A snake's blood doesn't keep it warm like ours does. When it is cold they lie in the sun to warm their bodies, and when it is too hot they hide in the shade. Because they have no legs, snakes **slither** across the ground on their bellies. They also have no eyelids, so their eyes are always open. Each eye is covered with a clear scale called a **brille**. Snakes have **forked** tongues which flick in and out of their mouths. They use their tongues to smell, and they 'hear' by using their whole bodies to sense **vibrations** from the ground.

Snakes eat mice and rats and help to keep the rodent population under control. Although they may not be cuddly, snakes are interesting creatures, and they have an important role to play in our world.

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Activities

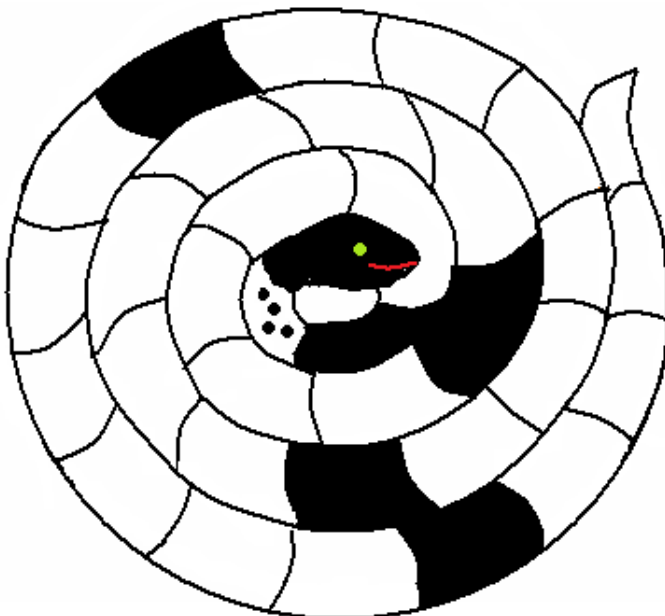
A. How do snakes differ from mammals?

	Snakes	Mammals
How do snakes walk?		
How do snakes hear?		
How do snakes smell?		

B: Snake-Words

Can you answer the questions and fill in the snake? Start at his tail. There is a word list next to him to help you.

1. Snakes their outer scales when they become too small.
2. A snake has a tongue
3. A snake's body is covered with
4. The clear scale covering a snake's eye is called a
5. A snake uses its tongue to



WORD LIST

smell
shed
scales
forked
brille

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Answer Sheet

Activity A

	Snakes	Mammals
How do snakes walk?	They slither on their bellies	They walk on their legs
How do snakes hear?	They hear vibrations with their whole bodies	They hear with their ears
How do snakes smell?	They smell with their tongues	They smell with their noses

Activity B

1. Shed
2. Forked
3. Scales
4. Brille
5. Smell