

REPTILE SURVEY: TRUE OR FALSE

This activity done individually or in teams can be used as a pre-visit knowledge assessment or review. How much do you know about reptiles? Answer the questions to find out!

Arizona Science Standards

SC-S1C4-02

SC-S3C1-02

SC-S1C1-02

SC-S4C1-02

SC-S4C4-01

SUPPLIES NEEDED

If the students are doing the activity individually, make a copy of the student version for each student.

GETTING STARTED

This activity can be done individually or with students divided into groups or teams. It is a good way to assess student knowledge prior taking the desert reptile program or it can be used as a way to assess knowledge gained after taking the program.

If your students will be doing this individually, make copies of the student questionnaire and have them answer the questions.

If your students will be doing this as a team activity, break them into small groups (the snakes, lizards, tortoise etc.), read the questions out loud and have the groups answer. Each team should have a “spokesperson” so when you ask for the answers one person is speaking for the group.

QUESTIONS

1. Reptiles are cold-blooded or ectothermic.

TRUE. Reptile body temperatures change according to the external environment. In order to maintain a safe body temperature range, reptiles will move from colder to warmer/warmer to colder to heat or cool their bodies.

2. All lizards eat bugs.

FALSE. Although most lizards are carnivores and eat insects as well as other invertebrates, some lizards such as Chuckwallas are vegetarians and eat only plants. Gila monsters and Mexican beaded lizards eat small birds, lizard eggs, and small rodents.

3. Most kinds of reptiles become endangered because people kill them for food and other products.

FALSE. These things do endanger some reptiles, but habitat loss and habitat fragmentation is the most serious problem endangering wild animals and plants.

4. Some snakes eat other snakes.

TRUE. The king snake will eat other snakes including rattlesnakes.

5. The Gila monster and the Mexican beaded lizard are the only venomous lizards in the world.

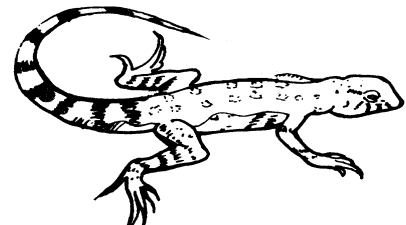
TRUE. The venom is used in defense and for subduing some prey. The venom glands are located in the lower jaw and venom is injected through grooves in the teeth while the Gila monster bites or chews. These Sonoran Desert natives spend much of their time in burrows and rarely bite humans unless handled or disturbed.

6. All lizards have legs.

FALSE. Some lizards including the European legless lizard and California's legless lizard lack legs.

7. Snakes have eyelids and are able to blink.

FALSE. Snakes do not have eyelids. Their eyes are protected by a clear scale (eyescale), which is replaced each time they shed.



REPTILE SURVEY: TRUE OR FALSE

8. It is legal for you to take a wild desert tortoise home as a pet.

FALSE. Laws protect the desert tortoise. They cannot be collected, killed, bought, transported, imported or exported from Arizona without authorization by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

9. Some lizards can shed or drop their tail as a means of escaping from predators.

TRUE. Species that are able to do this have a weak point along the tail where bones, muscles and blood vessels are modified to allow an easy break. Frequently the predator will focus its attack on the still wiggling tail allowing the lizard to make a quick escape.

10. Lizards and snakes are slimy.

FALSE. Reptiles have dry scaly skin. The scales are made of a substance called keratin. Our fingernails and a rhinoceros horn are also made of keratin.

11. All reptiles are born on the land.

TRUE. While many reptiles live in the water as youngsters or adults, they must lay their eggs or give birth on the land.

12. Salamanders are a type of reptile.

FALSE. Salamanders are amphibians. They do not have scales covering their body and they lay their eggs in the water.

13. Reptiles can be found on every continent.

FALSE. Reptiles do not live on the Antarctic continent because it is too cold.

14. Reptiles are some of the longest lived animals in the world.

TRUE. Large tortoises can live to be over 150 years old. Sonoran Desert Tortoise can live between 80-100 years. Alligators can live to be 70 years while some snakes can live up to 40 years.

15. Box turtles are called that because they prefer to live in a box.

FALSE. They are called box turtles because they can open and close the bottom (plastron) of their shell. They have a muscular hinge on the plastron which will allow them to pull their soft body parts in side and pull the shell closed...like the flaps on a box.

16. You can tell how old a rattlesnake is by counting the number of rattle segments on its tail.

FALSE. A rattlesnake will get a new segment or button every time it sheds. The problem is they may shed several times in one year. Also, because the segments are brittle they may break off over the course of the snakes life.

17. Rattlesnakes have heat sensing pits on the sides of their heads.

TRUE. The heat sensing pits helps them to locate and strike at warm-blooded animals that serve as their meals.

