

# All About Snakes

A Reading A-Z Level J Leveled Book  
Word Count: 376

## Connections

### Writing

Choose an opinion about snakes from page 4.

Write a paragraph to support your opinion.

Use at least two details from the text.

### Science

Choose another animal and compare it to a snake.

Think of three ways they are alike and three ways they are different.

Share your ideas with a partner.

LEVELED BOOK • J

# All About Snakes

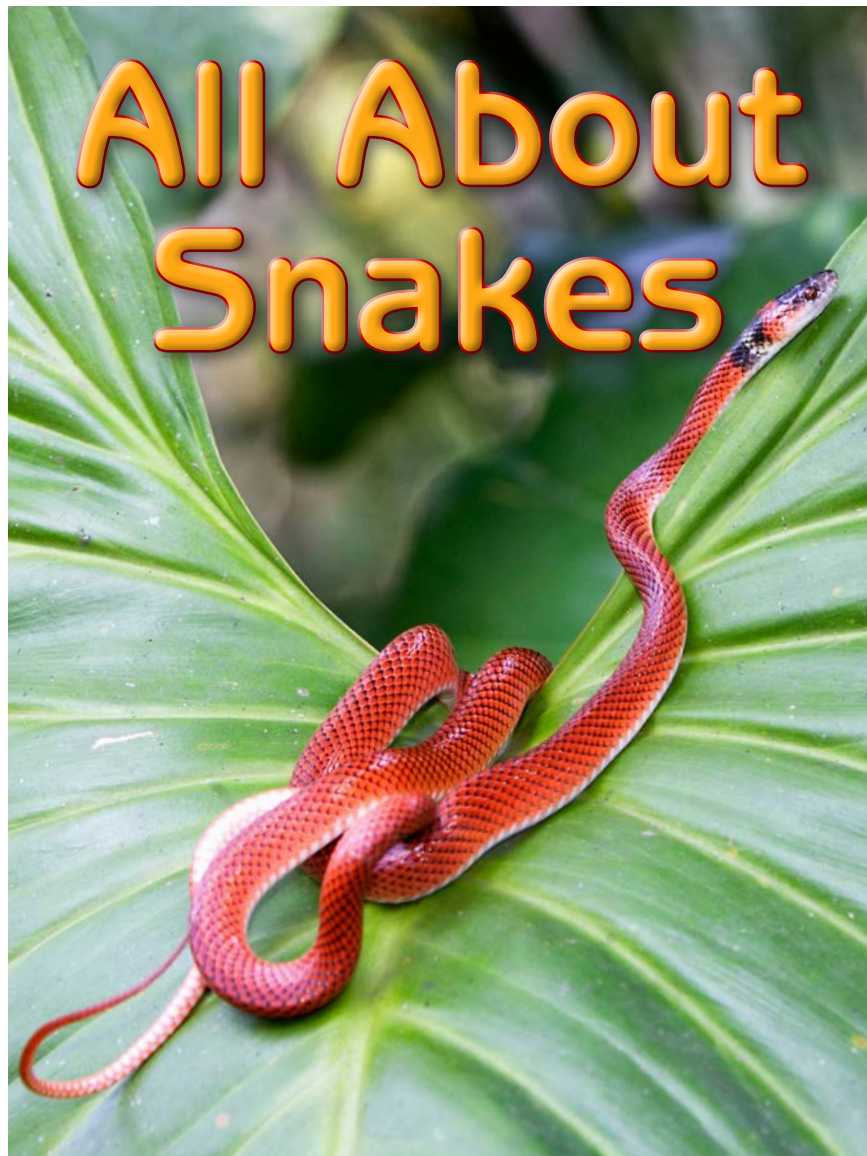


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# All About Snakes

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## Focus Question

What is a snake?

## Words to Know

fangs

reptiles

hibernate

scales

prey

venom

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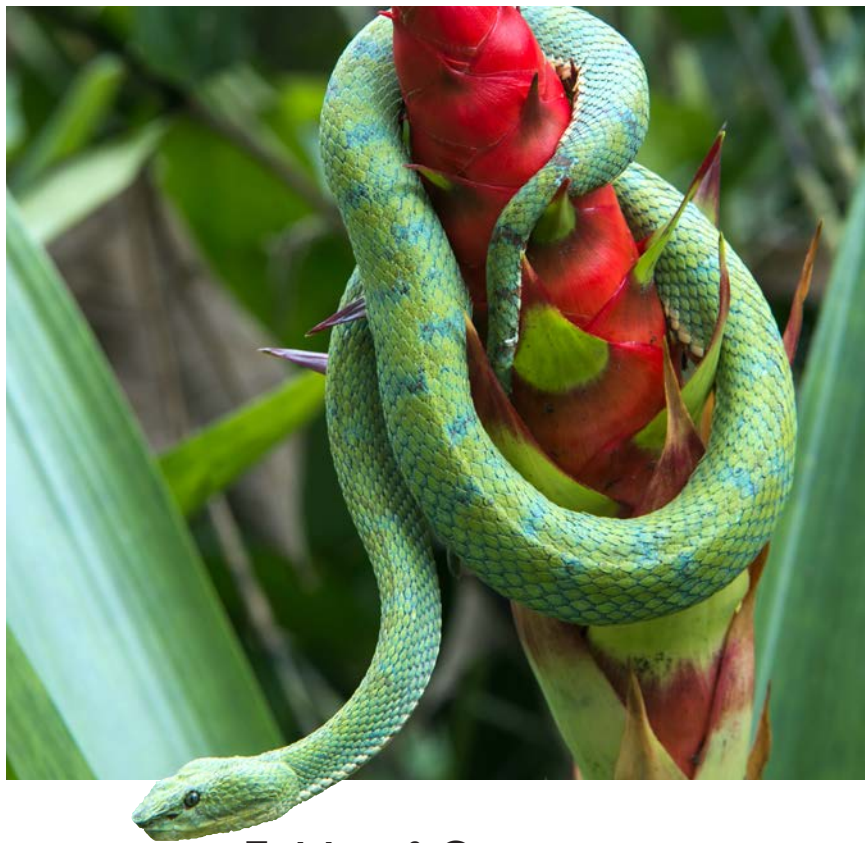
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### Correlation

#### LEVEL J

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Reading Recovery	17
DRA	18



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kingsnake



bull snake



anaconda



Wagler's pit viper



ringneck snake

Snakes come in many sizes and colors.

## Introduction

Some people do not like snakes. They may think snakes are gross or dangerous. Some can be dangerous. Snakes can also be beautiful and amazing.

## Where Snakes Live



banded sea krait

### KEY

- Land snakes
- Sea snakes

Some sea snakes can stay underwater for up to eight hours. They can also breathe through their skin!

## Where Do Snakes Live?

Many snakes live on land.

Some snakes live in or near bodies of water.

Snakes cannot live where it is cold all year long.

Snakes do not live on some islands.



green snake

A snake lies in the sun to warm its body. When it gets too warm, it goes in the shade or underground.

## Snake Traits

Snakes are **reptiles**.

All reptiles are cold-blooded and have a backbone.

The body temperature of cold-blooded animals changes with their surroundings.

They control their body temperature by moving to warmer or cooler places.



rat snake



garter snakes

A snake may hibernate alone (top). Sometimes, many snakes hibernate together. They wake up together, too (bottom).

Snakes that live in places with cold winters **hibernate**.

They go underground or beneath things where the temperature stays the same.

The snakes do not move until the temperature warms again.

Snakes that live where it is warm all year do not hibernate.



horned viper



black-banded snake

Snakes can move the way they do because of their skeleton and scales.

Snakes do not have legs, and their bodies are covered with **scales**.

They move by pushing their bodies against a surface.

The scales help grip the surface.



garter snake



A snake sometimes rubs against rough objects (top) to help remove its old skin (bottom).

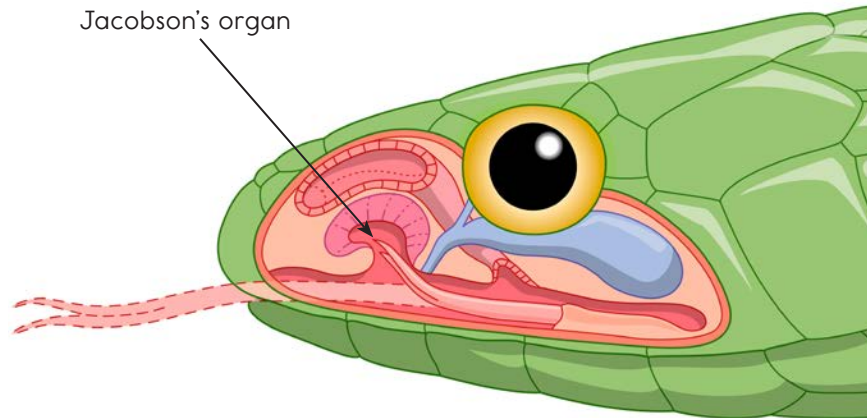
A snake's skin does not grow with the snake. As a snake grows, its skin stretches and splits, showing new skin and scales beneath. The snake sheds its old skin and leaves it behind.



hognose snake

After a snake lays its eggs (main), it usually leaves. The babies hatch alone (bottom).

Most snakes lay eggs with soft shells. These snakes lay eggs where they can hatch safely. Other snakes carry their eggs in their bodies. The eggs hatch in their bodies, and the baby snakes come out!



A special part of a snake's mouth lets the snake "taste" the air. This part is called the *Jacobson's organ*.

## What Do Snakes Hunt, and How?

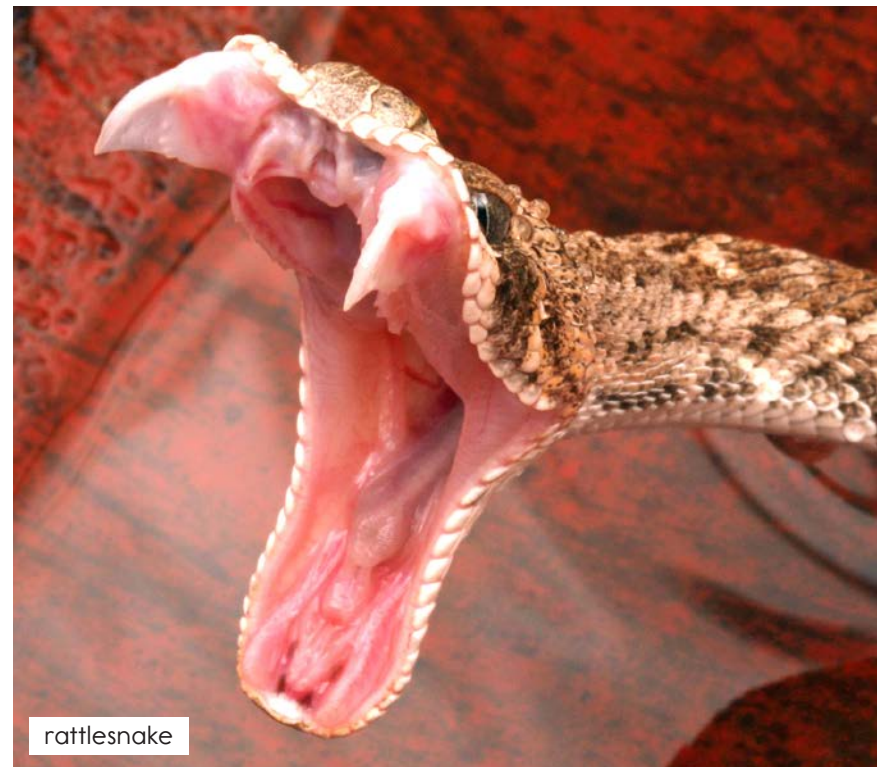
All snakes eat other animals.

Snakes use their tongues to find their **prey**.

They stick out their tongues to "taste" the air.

They follow the taste like a dog following a smell.

Some snakes also have special body parts that can sense heat from other animals.



Some snakes can attack in one-tenth of a second. That's about half as long as it takes a human to blink!

When snakes find their prey, some just bite and hold it. They may bite with their **fangs** or hold the prey in their jaws.

## Do Snakes Have Ears?

The answer is "kind of." Snakes do not hear like humans. However, they can feel some sounds through special parts of their head. One thing snakes don't have is eyelids!



corn snake



rattlesnake

Some large snakes can break the bones of their prey when they squeeze.

The venom of snakes is used to make medicine that helps cure humans who have been bitten.

Some snakes coil around prey and squeeze until it is dead. Some snakes have strong **venom** that they inject into prey through a bite. The venom may slow, stop, or even kill the other animal.



golden tree snake

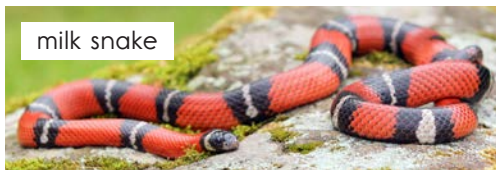
This snake can eat a lizard that is much larger than it is.

Most snakes cannot chew. Instead, they swallow their meal whole. Some snakes' jaws open so wide that they can swallow prey larger than their head!

### A Snake's Meal

Once a snake eats, it rests. It can take days for a snake to break down its food. For large snakes that eat large prey, it can take weeks!





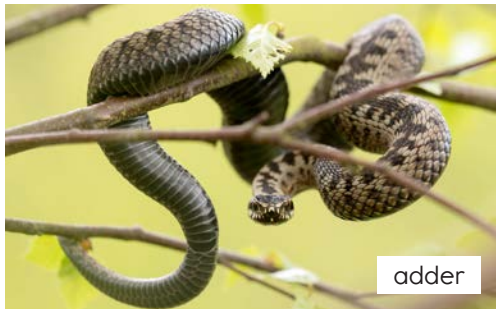
milk snake



parrot snake



olive python



adder



rattlesnake

## Conclusion

Now that you know more about snakes, what do you think of them?

## Glossary

- fangs** (*n.*) long, sharp, and sometimes hollow teeth (p. 12)
- hibernate** (*v.*) to go into a state of deep sleep, often during winter (p. 7)
- prey** (*n.*) an animal that is hunted and eaten by another animal (p. 11)
- reptiles** (*n.*) cold-blooded animals with backbones that are covered with scales (p. 6)
- scales** (*n.*) thin, flat plates that cover the outside of some animals (p. 8)
- venom** (*n.*) a poison that some animals use to kill prey and defend themselves, usually injected by biting or stinging (p. 13)