

## Lizards

Lizards are reptiles. They come in many sizes, colors and types and are found throughout the world. The largest lizard is the Komodo dragon, a reptile that can grow to be larger than a person. Tiny geckos are the smallest lizards. They are less than an inch long. Lizards have dry, scaly skin and most walk on four legs with clawed feet. They also have long tails and ear openings that can be seen on the sides of their heads. A lizard's tail is not very strong. It can easily break off if it gets caught or pulled. Nature designed lizards this way to confuse their enemies. Some lizards grow new tails easily, and some do not. It can be a problem for a lizard to lose its tail because they use their tails for balance. However, it is better to be a little wobbly than to be eaten by an enemy! And lizards have plenty of enemies! Snakes, birds and even other lizards prey on them. In some parts of the world, even people eat lizards as well as their eggs. Other defenses that lizards use against their enemies are hissing, swelling up or changing color to blend in with their surroundings.

Some lizards, such as iguanas, are vegetarians and eat only plants. Others eat bugs, spiders and small animals. Lizards use their sense of sight and smell to find food. They have jaws with teeth, and they also have teeth on the roof of their mouths, so lizards can eat many things that need to be chewed well.

Lizards live on the ground and in trees. They can be found in deserts, forests, prairies, marshes and rocky areas. They usually like warm summer days, but if it gets too hot, some lizards find shelter and hide. They usually sleep through the colder months, though they may come out to eat on warmer winter days. Lizards build nests and lay eggs just like birds do. However, mother lizards don't take care of their babies. They are pretty much left to take care of themselves.

Lizards are usually not dangerous, though they may bite. Some have sharp spines that can hurt if you touch them. Many lizards make interesting pets – unless you like furry animals that you can pet! The most popular pet lizards are iguanas, geckos and chameleons. Of the three, iguanas are considered the most playful, though they can be hard to train and need to be handled carefully. If you want to adopt an iguana or other lizard as a pet, find a pet shop that specializes in reptiles and be sure to find out all about how to care for a lizard before you bring one home.

## Lizards Questions

1. Lizards are
  - a. amphibians.
  - b. reptiles.
  - c. mammals.
  - d. sea creatures.
  
2. The largest lizard is the \_\_\_\_\_.
  
3. The smallest lizard is the \_\_\_\_\_.
  
4. Which of the following is *not* true of a lizard's tail?
  - a. It is used for balance.
  - b. It can break off easily.
  - c. It is used for hunting.
  - d. It is long.
  
5. If a lizard loses its tail
  - a. it might be able to grow a new one.
  - b. it might have trouble with balance.
  - c. Neither of these
  - d. Either a or b
  
6. Which of the following is not a defense that lizards use against their enemies?
  - a. They change colors.
  - b. They use their long tails as weapons.
  - c. They swell up.
  - d. They hiss.

### Lizards Questions (Cont'd)

7. Name three places where lizards live.
8. Lizards prefer
  - a. warm weather.
  - b. very hot weather.
  - c. cool weather.
  - d. winter months.
9. Which lizards are considered the “friendliest” pets?
  - a. iguanas
  - b. komodo dragons
  - c. geckos
  - d. chameleons
10. If you want to adopt a pet lizard, it’s a good idea to
  - a. rescue one from the wild.
  - b. get one at a pet superstore.
  - c. get one from a pet shop that specializes in reptiles.
  - d. get one from a friend.

Name \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Lizards Answers

1. b
2. Komodo dragon
3. tiny gecko
4. c
5. d
6. b
7. any three of the following: deserts, forests, prairies, marshes, rocky areas
8. a
9. a
10. c