



Anaconda Anticipation Guide

Click **A** if you agree

Click **B** if you disagree

Anacondas are members of the boa constrictor family.

Anacondas use their eyes to sniff the air.



Anacondas can hold their breath for ten minutes.



Anacondas are herbivores.



Anaconda babies are born live.



Anacondas have venom.



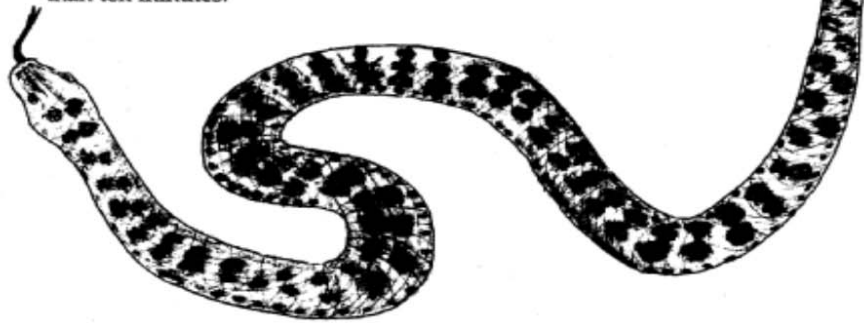
**Humans are the anacondas
biggest enemy.**



12. The Biggest Snake in the World

Many people are confused about the world's biggest snake. They aren't sure if the python, boa constrictor, or anaconda is the largest. If you are talking about a long, heavy snake, then the anaconda is the biggest. The boa constrictor gets up to 20 feet long. The anaconda, a member of the boa family, can grow to more than 30 feet (9 meters) long. That is as long as a bus! The python of Asia is about the same length as the anaconda, but 30-foot pythons only weigh 350 pounds. Thirty-foot anacondas weigh in at more than 550 pounds! They are so heavy that they move slowly on land. Those heavy snakes are better off living in the water, where they swim very well. The water helps support their heavy body. The color of the anaconda varies from dark green to olive green to yellowish green with dark spots or rings on it.

Anacondas like to lie in muddy water with just their eyes and nose sticking out. Like all snakes, they flick their tongue out to sniff the air. Their sense of smell seems to be better than their eyesight. Pits by the side of their mouth sense the heat of their prey, too. They use their jaws and teeth to grab animals that come to get a drink, then coil around it with lightning speed, constricting or squeezing so tightly that the prey can't breathe. Often they just drown their prey since anacondas can hold their breath underwater for more than ten minutes.



Anacondas stretch their jaws like other boas and pythons do, swallowing their whole meal at one time. They may have to stretch their elastic jaws for more than an hour to swallow the whole animal. They swallow the whole prey even if it is twice as big as their own head. They

(The Biggest Snake in the World, *continued*)

have even killed and eaten small deer and a whole jaguar! However, the main food eaten by these giant snakes is live birds, rodents, and wild pigs. Anacondas may sleep for a week after a good meal, and they can go for months without eating if necessary.



Most snakes lay eggs, but anaconda babies are born live. Their brood may have forty to sixty babies in it, and the babies are all the same colors. They are about 2 feet long at birth, and they can swim and hunt immediately. They live primarily on water animals like fish and frogs until they grow much larger. These young anacondas have to shed their skin to grow larger just like other snakes do. They will continue to do this their entire life since their old skin wears out, too. They simply split the old skin open at the mouth and crawl out of it. They already have a complete new "suit" of scaly skin underneath that old one.

Even though anacondas have no venom (poison), they can bite to defend themselves. People don't have to worry because these snakes swim away from humans whenever they can. Strangely, humans are their main enemy since they hunt anacondas for their skin and cut down their rainforest habitat.

pits

South America

squeeze

boa

tongue

drown

Anacaondas are in the _____ family and live in the jungles on the continent of _____.

Anacondas sense their prey using their _____ to smell them and their _____ to feel the heat of their prey

Anacondas grab prey and either _____ it underwater or _____ the prey until it can't breathe.

THINKING ABOUT THE ANACONDA.....

- 1. Describe the anaconda using a circle map.**
- 2. How can the anaconda swallow a whole deer or jaguar at one time?**
- 3. Why do you think humans don't fear the anaconda very much?**
- 4. Why are anacondas better off in the water than land?**
- 5. Why do snakes shed their skin?**

VIDEO TIME

[http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?
guidAssetId=110DDB4A-4575-4059-
B3F0-831EAFDE3C20](http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=110DDB4A-4575-4059-B3F0-831EAFDE3C20)

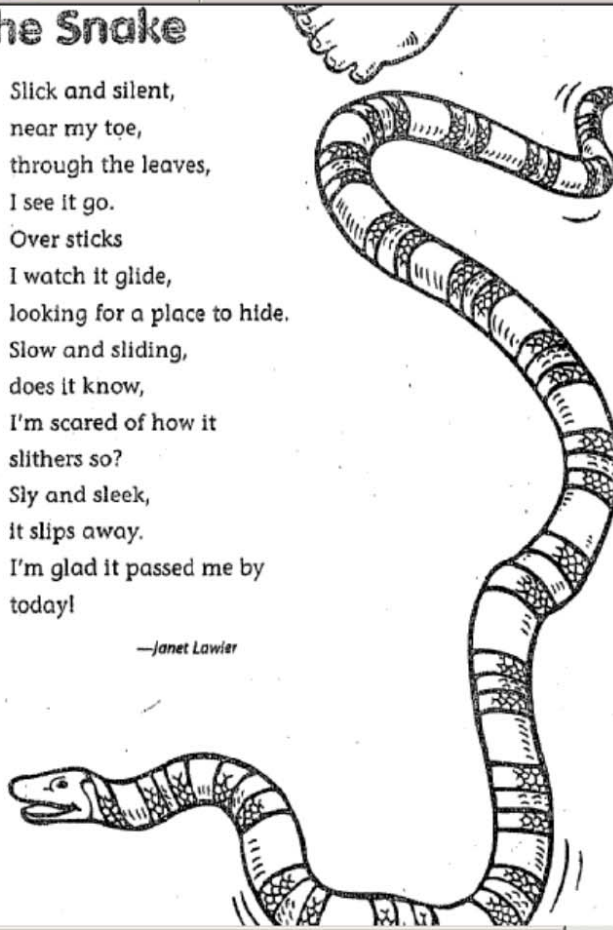
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**Working with your partner
create a summary acrostic
of what you have learned
about Anacondas.**

The Snake

Slick and silent,
near my toe,
through the leaves,
I see it go.
Over sticks
I watch it glide,
looking for a place to hide.
Slow and sliding,
does it know,
I'm scared of how it
slithers so?
Sly and sleek,
it slips away.
I'm glad it passed me by
today!

—Janet Lawler



1. What **slithers** in this poem?

- Ⓐ leaves
- Ⓑ a snake
- Ⓒ a worm
- Ⓓ the speaker

2. What is the snake trying to do?

- Ⓐ dig a hole
- Ⓑ climb a tree
- Ⓒ find a place to hide
- Ⓓ make its way home

3. How do you think the speaker feels about snakes?

- Ⓐ tired
- Ⓑ upset
- Ⓒ happy
- Ⓓ afraid

4. Which of the following does not mean the same as sleek?

- Ⓐ rough
- Ⓑ shiny
- Ⓒ silky
- Ⓓ smooth

5. How does the speaker feel when the snake is gone?

- Ⓐ sad
 - Ⓑ angry
 - Ⓒ happy
 - Ⓓ disappointed
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