

# Snake Survey

**Subjects:** Language Arts, Science and Art

**Objectives:** Students will complete an attitude survey regarding their feelings about snakes and take part in a discussion designed to dispel myths, and make snakes out of old men's ties.

**Materials:**

- pencil and paper
- old mens' ties (one for each student)
- hanger for each student (optional)
- red felt and googly eyes



**Procedure:**

1. Ask the students to list the top five animals of which they are most fearful. Tally the responses on the board. Snakes will probably be a popular answer.
2. Note the animals that had the most tally marks. Tell the students they will be talking about one particular animal, snakes! Ask students why so many people have problems with snakes. Answers will vary. One thing that might seem creepy to people is they don't have legs. We're used to things having two or four legs. Spiders with eight seem creepy and snakes with none, whoa!
3. Write the following statements on the board. Have the students rate each statement as either 1- disagree 2- agree or 3 - strongly agree.
  1. Snakes are mean.
  2. Snakes are ugly and gross.
  3. Most snakes are poisonous.
  4. Snakes are slimy.
  5. Endangered species that are cute or intelligent should be saved before endangered snakes.
4. Tally these results. Begin discussion of attributes of snakes. Some students may be snake savvy. Have them participate in the discussion, as well.
5. Discussion responses to statements 1 – 5:

**Statement One** →Students should understand that snakes, like many other animals, exhibit a variety of behaviors. Some species of snakes are quite docile whereas, others are more aggressive. Behavior that students may label as “mean,” such as eating other animals or biting people are merely a snake's way of surviving.

**Statement Two** →Although some people may believe that snakes are ugly and gross, it is important for them to know that snakes evolved such features to help them survive. For example, a snake's streamlined body can fit into animal burrows.

**Statement Three** →Fewer than 10% of snakes have venom that can hurt humans.

**Statement Four** →Snakes are not slimy at all. Rather, their skin is dry and can be smooth.

**Statement Five** →It is important that we protect all living things, because every species has a role to play within its habitat. For example, snakes eat rodents that spread disease.
6. After discussion, have students make a snake pet for a friend or themselves from an old men's tie. Do this by stuffing the tie with stuffing or old panty hose. Use a hanger to get the stuffing deep. You can leave the hanger in the tie if you want to make it “bendy.” Cut tongues out of red felt and glue that, along with googly eyes onto the big end of the tie.

# Garter Snake Classifieds

**Subjects:** Language Arts and Science

**Objectives:**

Science: Students will synthesize what they have learned about a gartersnake's habitat needs.

Language Arts: Students will be able to write in a variety of formats to record, generate and reflect upon ideas.



**Materials:**

- Examples of advertisements from a newspaper
- Pencil and paper

**Procedure:**

Review the components of habitat with your students: food, water, shelter, and space in a suitable arrangement.

1. Ask the students to imagine that they are a gartersnake looking for a place to live. Have them describe why they are looking, what they would like to have available in their habitat and how long they will be there.
2. Instruct children to write and illustrate advertisements that offer gartersnake habitat for rent.
3. Display the advertisements.

**Example for a kestrel:**

Old woodpecker hole now available. Located on dead tree near forest edge. Close to meadow with lots of grasshoppers and mice. Many perches for those with young and fledglings just learning to fly. Interest kestrels should call Speedy at 1-800-4falcon.

**Assessment idea:** Ask the students which classified ad a gartersnake might answer and why.

**Extension:** Have students create a gartersnake newspaper that includes gartersnake issues and stories. Don't forget the comic section!

# WILDLIFE WORKSHEET

## Cinquain and Paint a Snake

A cinquain is a 5 lined poem, which follows the format below. It does not have to rhyme!

Title (2 syllables)

Description of title (4 syllables)

Description of action (6 syllables)

Description of feeling (8 syllables)

Rename title (2 syllables)

Sample:

*Salmon*

*Anadromous*

*Migrate to the ocean*

*Powerful native of Idaho*

*Chinook*

Directions:

- On the lines below, write a cinquain poem about a snake that lives in our state. Be sure your poem has 5 lines and follows the correct number of syllables.
- Trade poems with a partner to edit spelling and number of syllables.
- Follow the directions in the box to make a hand-print snake. Write your final draft neatly on your art work.

**Line 1:** Title

**Line 2:** Description of title

**Line 3:** Description of action

**Line 4:** Description of feeling

**Line 5:** Rename title

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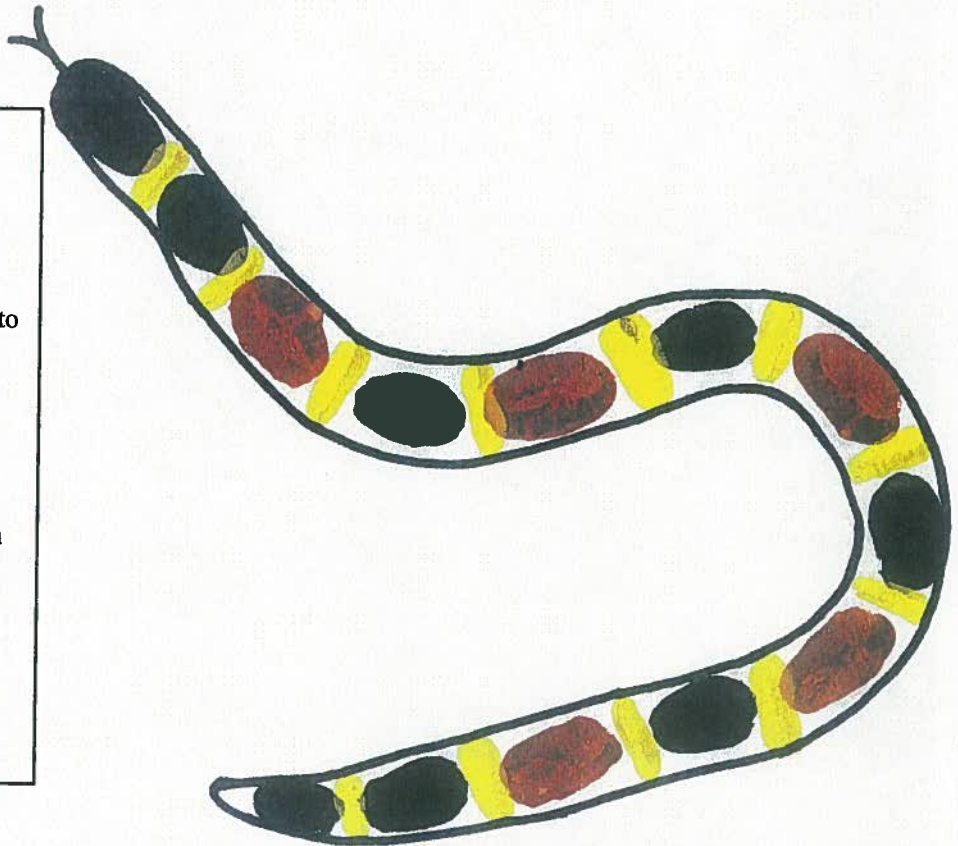
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### Directions for making a hand-print snake

1. Decide what three colors you would like your snake to be.
2. You'll need to use both pointer fingers at the same time, so have all paint ready.
3. Start by dipping your pointer fingers in the two most prominent colors you would like your snake to be.
4. Make a fingerprint with one finger on your paper. Place the other finger just about a ¼ inch after the first print.
5. Alternate fingers following the same directions as above, making a curly design.
6. Let dry. Add the third color as a stripe between the two colored finger prints. Use the side of your pinky finger to make the stripe.
7. Outline with marker when dry and add a forked tongue and eyes. Eyes could be painted with white paint or drawn.

*\*Modified from Hand-Print Animal Art: A Kids Can Series by Carolyn Carreiro*



# What It Takes to be a Snake

**Subjects:** Science

**Objectives:** Students will complete a comparison chart describing the differences between humans and snakes.

**Materials:**

- Pencil and paper
- Coloring Tools



**Procedure:**

1. Break the students into groups. Give each group a characteristic of snakes to research. The following is a list to get you started: What class do snakes belong to? (reptiles) Are snakes exothermic or endothermic? (exothermic) Do snakes have a backbone? (yes, chordata phylum) How do snakes smell? (with their tongues) How do snakes see? (different visual field with each eye) What is a snake's skin like? (thick and smooth and can retain water) What do snakes need to survive? (food, water, shelter, space) Do snakes lay eggs? (some do; others, like the rattlesnake, bear live young) Do snakes hear? (no outer ear, but inner ear feels vibrations) In what way do snakes eat? (swallow prey whole) How does a snake shed skin? (all at once) How does a snake move? (slithering)
2. Have each group produce a brief answer to the question they were researching. After students have researched and written their answers, bring them all together to share with the entire group.
3. Ask students if they think we share any of the same characteristics of snakes. Tell them they are going to get back into their groups and discuss the question they have, but relate it to humans. For example: the hearing group would say snakes are different because they have inner ears that help sense vibrations. Humans have outer ears that hear with sound waves through the air. Students may need time to explore how humans do things. Some groups will be easier than others! Assist where needed!
4. Bring groups back together to share. Are we more similar to snakes than different? Let students decide. One key element you'll want to point out is that we both need food, water, shelter and space to survive. We also both belong to the phylum chordata.
5. After discussion, ask students to create a What If... poster. The poster should include a picture of either a snake with human characteristics or a human with snake characteristics. This could get fun! Imagine a person walking into a bakery sticking out his/her tongue, or a human shedding skin all at once. What about a snake walking on two legs or a snake chewing gum. Posters should include a sentence describing their illustration such as, "What If a Snake Walked on Two Legs?" It also should explain how that's not possible.
6. Display the posters in the hall to share your students' knowledge of snakes!

