

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Reptile Characteristics Worksheet**

1. Come on, herpetologists, let's go on a reptile exploration! There are more than 10,000 different species of reptiles, and they can be found everywhere in the world except Antarctica. Take a closer look to observe the different features of these reptiles. Name a few of their differences.
  
2. All reptiles are cold-blooded and cannot control their own body temperature. They need sunlight to warm themselves. This is why reptiles cannot live in Antarctica: it is too cold there for them to survive. Here are two warm ecosystems where reptiles can live. Move each of the models into the desert or rainforest ecosystem. Take a photo of both ecosystems.

3. All reptiles have an internal backbone, or spine. This makes them all vertebrates. Dissect the model of the snake and find its vertebrae. Take a photo of this animal's backbone. How does this internal backbone help this animal?
  
4. Look closely at these reptiles and notice how they have different noses, nostrils, or snouts. Even though they have different ways of taking in air, all reptiles have lungs to breathe in oxygen and release carbon dioxide. How do reptiles that spend most of their time in the water, such as crocodiles and alligators, breathe?
  
5. All reptiles have a special protective covering on the outer part of their bodies. Some reptiles, such as snakes and lizards, have scales over a waterproof layer of skin. This helps reptiles to live on the land and in water. Reptile scales are different from fish scales. Take a closer look to compare the scales of snakes and fish. Why do you think they are different?
  
6. Other reptiles, such as crocodiles and turtles, have a special type of protection over their skin called a scute. The scutes on crocodiles are their skin spikes. What do you think are the scutes on turtles? If you guessed their hard, bony shells, you are correct! Take a close look at the scutes of this crocodile and turtle.



11. Most reptiles are carnivorous, or only eat meat. Turtles and lizards, however, like to eat both plants and animals. Match each reptile to the diet you think it might eat. Take a photo of all the reptiles with their food.

12. That sure was an exciting trip through the world of reptiles! Name three characteristics that all reptiles share.

13. Now that you know all about the common characteristics of reptiles, how do these internal and external structures help reptiles to survive in their environment?