



Imagine a creature that looks like it comes from an alien world, with a triangular head that turns 180 degrees and two big, bulging eyes. Well, there's no need to imagine, because such a creature exists right here on Earth - it's called a praying mantis! These fascinating insects are named so because of their prayer-like stance, with their two front legs folded as if praying. A praying mantis can be green or brown and can range in size from 0.5 to 6 inches, and it's a master of disguise, blending perfectly with its surroundings.



Speaking of surroundings, praying mantises can be found all over the world, living in a variety of environments. From warm, tropical rainforests to cool, temperate regions, these adaptable critters make their homes in trees, shrubs, and even in grassy meadows. They're most commonly seen in the spring and summer months, and if you're lucky enough, you might spot one in your own backyard! And do you know what's even cooler? Female mantises lay up to 200 eggs, which they encase in a protective foam that hardens into an egg case.

Now, let's talk about what happens when those eggs hatch. The baby mantises, called nymphs, look like miniature versions of their parents. As they grow, they shed their skin, a process called molting, until they become full-grown mantises. These insects are carnivores and eat a variety of insects, including flies and moths, and sometimes they even eat each other!



Lastly, let's not forget to mention the interesting relationship mantises have with other animals and humans. For some animals, mantises are a source of food, but for others, these stealthy hunters are a threat. Humans, on the other hand, appreciate mantises because they help control pest populations. So, next time you see a praying mantis, remember that it's not only an incredible insect, but also an important part of our ecosystem.

Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

- 1) What is the process called when baby mantises shed their skin?
 - A. Shedding
 - B. Skinning
 - C. Mantising
 - D. Molting
- 2) Where would you most likely not find praying mantises making their homes?
 - A. Trees
 - B. Meadows
 - C. Shrubs
 - D. Beaches
- 3) What are baby mantises called?
 - A. larvae
 - B. pupae
 - C. nymphs
 - D. caterpillars
- 4) What is special about the head of a praying mantis?
 - A. It grows a new head every 6 months.
 - B. It is able to detach its head.
 - C. It can survive even without its head.
 - D. It can turn its head 180 degrees.
- 5) What colors can a praying mantis be?
 - A. Blue or red.
 - B. Purple or yellow.
 - C. Black or white.
 - D. Green or brown.
- 6) How many eggs can a female praying mantis lay?
 - A. up to 500
 - B. up to 100
 - C. up to 200
 - D. only one
- 7) Which best describes the diet of mantises?
 - A. herbivores
 - B. carnivores
 - C. insectivores
 - D. omnivores
- 8) What time of year are praying mantises most commonly seen?
 - A. Fall and winter months
 - B. Random times throughout the year
 - C. Spring and summer months
 - D. All year round
- 9) What is the purpose of the foam that covers the eggs?
 - A. Provides food for the nymphs
 - B. Protects the eggs
 - C. Keeps eggs warm
 - D. Helps eggs hatch faster
- 10) Why do humans appreciate mantises?
 - A. They help control pest populations
 - B. They make good pets
 - C. They help spread seeds
 - D. They help clean rivers
- 11) Why are praying mantises named so?
 - A. because they can turn their heads 180 degrees
 - B. because they are great hunters
 - C. because of their prayer-like stance
 - D. because they have triangular heads



Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or if it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 12) "I'm vegetarian, I don't eat insects."
- 13) "I usually lay just one or two eggs."
- 14) "Whether it's green or brown, my color always matches where I live. This helps me stay safe from my predators."
- 15) "We mainly eat plant-based food."
- 16) "I can't turn my head."
- 17) "All animals see me as a source of food."
- 18) "You would usually spot me during the spring and summer months."
- 19) "As I grow, I have to shed my skin, a process called molting, kind of like how snakes do!"
- 20) "See my front legs? I fold them up when I'm at rest, so it looks like I'm praying."
- 21) "We remain the same size throughout our life."
- 22) "I look completely different from my parents when I'm younger."
- 23) "We mantises are disliked by most humans!"
- 24) "From hot jungles to cool grasslands, I can make any place my home."
- 25) "I'm only active during the winter months."
- 26) "Sometimes, survival gets tough and I have to eat my fellow mantises."
- 27) "When my babies, or nymphs, come out from eggs, they look exactly like me, but a smaller version."
- 28) "When it's time to lay eggs, I can lay up to 200 at a time! I protect them in a special hard case."
- 29) "We only live in cold, snowy areas."
- 30) "I can twist my head all the way around to look at things behind me. Kind of like having eyes in the back of my head."
- 31) "There's nothing like a good meal of flies or moths. I'm a carnivore, you see."

Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 32) When hatched, praying mantis nymphs look just like their parents but in a smaller form.
- 33) Seeing a praying mantis in your backyard could be the most exciting part of your day.
- 34) Female praying mantises can lay almost 200 eggs.
- 35) The way a praying mantis blends with its environment is absolutely amazing.
- 36) The praying mantis is an insect that has large, bulging eyes and a triangular head which can rotate 180 degrees.
- 37) It's astonishing that a female mantis can lay up to 200 eggs!
- 38) Praying mantises are carnivores eating a variety of insects, even including their own species.
- 39) Praying mantises can be found in many different environments all around the globe.
- 40) Praying mantises have the most interesting look among all insects.



- 41) Praying mantises are quite scary because of their ability to turn their heads 180 degrees.

Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 42) Mantises are a threat to some animals.
- 43) Praying mantises are only active in the winter months.
- 44) The babies look like miniature versions of their parents.
- 45) A praying mantis can turn its head 360 degrees.
- 46) Baby mantises are called nymphs.
- 47) Praying mantises are only green in color.
- 48) Praying mantises are herbivores.
- 49) Praying mantises only live in tropical rainforests.
- 50) The praying mantis get their name from their prayer-like stance.
- 51) Female mantises lay up to 200 eggs.

Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

- 52) The praying mantis is blending perfectly with the leaves!
- 53) Watch how it holds its folded forelegs like it is praying.
- 54) What do some cultures consider praying mantises to be symbols of?
- 55) There are over 2,000 species of praying mantises, that's an huge number!
- 56) Praying mantises help control pests in gardens by eating them.
- 57) How do praying mantises defend themselves when threatened?
- 58) Praying mantises are considered symbols of good luck and patience in many cultures.
- 59) Why do gardeners like having praying mantises around?
- 60) Praying mantises use their front legs to appear bigger and scarier when threatened.
- 61) Gently handle a praying mantis to observe it up close, but remember to release it unharmed.
- 62) Incredibly, some praying mantises can camouflage themselves to blend in with their surroundings!
- 63) Notice the praying mantis's long and flexible antenna.



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| 1. _____ | 26. _____ | 51. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 27. _____ | 52. _____ |
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| 4. _____ | 29. _____ | 54. _____ |
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|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <u>D</u> | 26. <u>true</u> | 51. <u>true</u> |
| 2. <u>D</u> | 27. <u>true</u> | 52. <u>exclamatory</u> |
| 3. <u>C</u> | 28. <u>true</u> | 53. <u>imperative</u> |
| 4. <u>D</u> | 29. <u>false</u> | 54. <u>interrogative</u> |
| 5. <u>D</u> | 30. <u>true</u> | 55. <u>exclamatory</u> |
| 6. <u>C</u> | 31. <u>true</u> | 56. <u>declarative</u> |
| 7. <u>B</u> | 32. <u>fact</u> | 57. <u>interrogative</u> |
| 8. <u>C</u> | 33. <u>opinion</u> | 58. <u>declarative</u> |
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| 12. <u>false</u> | 37. <u>opinion</u> | 62. <u>exclamatory</u> |
| 13. <u>false</u> | 38. <u>fact</u> | 63. <u>imperative</u> |
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12) "I'm vegetarian, I don't eat insects." (paragraph 3)