



Just like superheroes have unique costumes, the American Alligator has a special suit of its own - a tough, scaly skin which is usually black! This amazing creature can grow up to 15 feet long, that's longer than most cars! These alligators have a broad snout and their upper jaw is wider than the lower one, causing the teeth in the lower jaw to fit into the sockets of the upper jaw. Their eyes are placed high on their heads, so they can see while submerged in water.



Speaking of water, did you know that American Alligators are like the ultimate swimmers? They live in freshwater environments, such as ponds, marshes, wetlands, rivers, and swamps, primarily in the Southeastern United States. These areas provide all the things an alligator needs, like food, fresh water and plenty of sunbathing spots. Also, their nests, which are made of vegetation, sticks, leaves, and mud, can be found in these habitats.

Now, let's talk about the alligator's daily menu. Young alligators love to munch on small fish, insects, snails, crustaceans, and worms. As they grow larger, they expand their diet to larger fish, turtles, various mammals, birds, and other reptiles. They are known as opportunistic feeders because they can eat anything that comes near the water's edge.



While alligators may seem scary, they usually prefer to avoid humans unless their nests are threatened. However, they play an important role in their ecosystem by controlling the population of certain prey species. Alligators and humans have a complex relationship, they are often seen as dangerous, but they also fascinate us and are protected by conservation laws in many areas. So, the next time you think of an alligator, remember they are not just big, scary creatures, but an important part of our natural world.



**Solve each problem.**

**Use the article to answer the question.**

- 1) What color is the American Alligator's skin?  
A. Brown  
B. White  
C. Green  
D. Black
- 2) In which part of the United States are American Alligators primarily found?  
A. Midwestern  
B. Northeastern  
C. Southwestern  
D. Southeastern
- 3) What do young alligators eat?  
A. Small fish, insects, snails, crustaceans, and worms  
B. Fruits and vegetables  
C. Large fish, turtles, various mammals  
D. Grains and nuts
- 4) Where do American Alligators live?  
A. Deserts  
B. Freshwater environments  
C. Jungles  
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- 5) What is the shape of an alligator's snout?  
A. Narrow  
B. Wider at the bottom  
C. Pointy  
D. Broad
- 6) How long can an American Alligator grow?  
A. Up to 15 feet long  
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C. Up to 10 feet long  
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- 7) Are alligators often dangerous to humans?  
A. Yes, they often hunt humans for food  
B. No, they prefer to avoid humans unless their nests are threatened  
C. Yes, they often provoke humans  
D. Yes, they often attack humans on sight
- 8) Where on their heads are American Alligators' eyes located?  
A. At the sides of their heads  
B. At the front of their heads  
C. At the back of their heads  
D. High on their heads
- 9) What do alligators eat as they grow larger?  
A. Bigger alligators  
B. Rocks and soil  
C. Larger fish, turtles, and mammals  
D. More insects and worms
- 10) Why are American Alligators considered opportunistic feeders?  
A. They can eat anything that comes near the water's edge  
B. They travel long distances to find food  
C. They only eat during certain seasons  
D. They steal food from other animals

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



- 11) "You'll mostly find me in freshwater homes - like marshes, wetlands, rivers, swamps - you name it!"
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- 15) "I have skin that is tough and scaly."
- 16) "You know what's really cool about me? My eyes are placed high on my head, so I can see even when I'm submerged in the water."
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- 23) "My eyes are positioned low on my head, so I can view fish underwater."

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

- 24) American Alligators primarily live in freshwater environments.
- 25) The American Alligator's black scaly skin looks sleek and elegant.
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- 27) It's neat that alligators can see well even when they are underwater.
- 28) American Alligators usually have black scaly skin.
- 29) It would be scary to see an alligator swimming towards you in a swamp.
- 30) Young American Alligators eat a diet consisting of small fish, insects, snails, crustaceans, and worms.
- 31) The upper jaw of an American Alligator is wider than the lower one.
- 32) The alligator's broad snout and wide upper jaw make it look silly.
- 33) The way the American Alligator can grow up to 15 feet long is incredible.

**Determine if the statement is true or false.**

- 34) American alligators live in saltwater environments.
- 35) American alligators only eat small insects.
- 36) American alligators will eat anything that comes near the water's edge.
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- 40) American Alligators primarily live in the Southeastern United States.
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|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>      <b>D</b>      </u>        | 26. <u>      <b>fact</b>      </u>          |
| 2. <u>      <b>D</b>      </u>        | 27. <u>      <b>opinion</b>      </u>       |
| 3. <u>      <b>A</b>      </u>        | 28. <u>      <b>fact</b>      </u>          |
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| 6. <u>      <b>A</b>      </u>        | 31. <u>      <b>fact</b>      </u>          |
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| 8. <u>      <b>D</b>      </u>        | 33. <u>      <b>opinion</b>      </u>       |
| 9. <u>      <b>C</b>      </u>        | 34. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>         |
| 10. <u>      <b>A</b>      </u>       | 35. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>         |
| 11. <u>      <b>true</b>      </u>    | 36. <u>      <b>true</b>      </u>          |
| 12. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>   | 37. <u>      <b>true</b>      </u>          |
| 13. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>   | 38. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>         |
| 14. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>   | 39. <u>      <b>true</b>      </u>          |
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| 19. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>   | 44. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>         |
| 20. <u>      <b>true</b>      </u>    | 45. <u>      <b>declarative</b>      </u>   |
| 21. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>   | 46. <u>      <b>interrogative</b>      </u> |
| 22. <u>      <b>true</b>      </u>    | 47. <u>      <b>declarative</b>      </u>   |
| 23. <u>      <b>false</b>      </u>   | 48. <u>      <b>declarative</b>      </u>   |
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