Crocodilians

All types of crocodiles and alligators are known as crocodilians. Crocs and gators have many common characteristics which are rather easy to recognize. Both crocs and gators have scaly skin. They also have similar eating habits: they both eat whatever they can catch in the water. When they are along the shoreline, crocodilians may grab a bite by eating birds or small land animals. An interesting fact about crocodilians is that some of them can eat up to half their body weight. They sure have big appetites.

Another common characteristic of the crocodile and alligator is how they take care of their young. Unlike most reptiles, mother crocodilians protect their young until they are old enough to take care of themselves. Once their eggs hatch on land, they carefully carry their babies to the water in their mouths. Mother crocodilians will attack any predator in order to protect their babies. Without a doubt, alligators and crocodiles are amazing animals!

Crocs versus Gators

The most common question about crocodilians is, “What is the difference between an alligator and a crocodile?” Although they share many similarities, there are quite a few differences as well. Although both creatures are called crocodilians, they come from two completely different families. Alligators come from the Alligatoridae family, and the crocodile comes from the Crocodylidae family.

Some of the differences between the two are fairly easy to tell. Crocodiles have working salt glands in their mouths. Therefore crocodiles are more able to stand salt and usually can be found in salt water. Unlike the crocs, the gators’ glands do not function in the same way. Consequently, alligators are less tolerant to salt and usually live in fresh water. The shape of their snout is another key factor in telling which one is which. Gators have more of a “U”-shaped snout, whereas a crocodile's snout is “V”-shaped. Another way to tell the difference is by looking at their teeth. The teeth of the crocodile are even and do not overlap each other, but the alligator’s top teeth overlap their bottom teeth.

Even though some differences are easy to see, their difference in behavior is not as obvious. Many people believe that crocs are more aggressive than gators. Alligators tend to run away when they are alarmed, unlike the ferocious crocodile.

Caution!!!

It is important to know that these two creatures are quite dangerous. Crocodilians are very territorial and can harm humans if they feel threatened. So if you are ever observing these animals, ALWAYS take caution while around them.

Now you Know!

Although the two are often confused, knowing the facts can help people tell them apart. Some features are easier to detect than others. Crocodiles and alligators have many similarities and differences. Even though they are of the same species and look a lot alike, they are unique animals with many different characteristics that set them apart.
1 Which sentence best tells the main idea of the passage?
A. Alligators and crocodiles have little in common.
B. With a little knowledge about crocodiles and alligators, they are not that hard to tell apart.
C. Crocodiles and alligators are animals that must be studied up close.
D. Only an expert can tell the difference between a crocodile and an alligator.

2 What is the main idea of the section "Crocs versus Gators"? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

Write your answer on the lines below.

3 How do the bold subtitles help the reader to better follow the text?
A. They identify important vocabulary words that will help the reader learn more about crocs and gators.
B. They help the reader easily identify the most important differences between crocs and gators.
C. They help the reader easily identify the topics that they will learn about crocs and gators in each section.
D. They identify where crocs and gators are typically found.

4 Read these sentences from "Crocs and Gators."

Crocodiles have working salt glands in their mouths. Therefore crocodiles are more able to stand salt and usually can be found in salt water. Unlike the crocs, the gators' glands do not function in the same way.

As used in this passage, the word stand means
A. to be in an upright position.
B. to be set or fixed.
C. a piece of furniture.
D. to put up with or tolerate.
Anika's First Day

A streak of sunlight danced in the room as the alarm clock snarled for the fourth time.

"Anika," cried the nervous voice of Anika's father from downstairs. "It is 7:30 and if you don't get out of bed immediately, you'll be late."

Anika groaned as she awoke from a wonderful dream where summer continued forever and the first day of school never arrived. "Too bad that was all in my imagination," Anika whispered as she leaped out of bed, disappointed that summer vacation was over.

While the first day of school rarely made Anika nervous, her stomach was definitely rumbling with worry. This year, Anika was attending a new school and almost everything would be different. Sure, most of her fifth grade classmates had moved on with her from their final year at Jefferson Elementary School. However, Sharad, Anika's older brother, had spoken all about the "middle school experience." According to Sharad, she had to switch classes, make sure she got to class on time, and get used to a whole new school, which had two floors, unlike her old one-story school.

"You better hurry up," Sharad called up the stairs. "You never want to be late for school or you might have to stay after."

"Great," Anika said with dismay as she dashed to the kitchen table. "Just another thing to worry about."

Sharad glanced up from his bowl of cereal. "What are you so nervous about?" Sharad asked, trying to coax his sister into talking.

Anika hesitated a moment and frowned. "Well, last year, I knew everything about our school and I didn't have a million things to figure out. This year, middle school is entirely new. What if I get in trouble, or confused, or get lost?"

"Get lost?" Sharad said with a laugh. "The only way you are going to get lost is if you don't pay attention."

Anika's eyebrows jumped at Sharad's laughter. "Seriously, what if something goes wrong?"

"Think about kindergarten. You were new to school then and felt worried, right?"

"Right," Anika replied trying to recall those distant days of kindergarten.

"What made you feel better?" her brother asked.

Anika's brown eyes widened and she felt her worries start to swoop away. "I knew my best friend was there. I also knew, that if I had a problem, you were in the classroom down the hall."

Sharad nodded, hoping to convince Anika he was there to protect her if needed. "And the same thing is going to happen this year. You have other sixth grade friends at school, and I am going to be upstairs, where the seventh graders are. So, if you have a problem, just find me and I will help you."

"Are you sure?" Anika asked, as her face beamed with hopefulness. She dug into her oatmeal, aware that if she did not finish quickly, they would both be late for school.

"Of course," Sharad continued, "as the year goes along, don't be surprised if I pretend to ignore you. That's what good brothers do."
"Thanks," Anika replied with a laugh. She and Sharad had their differences, but this time she knew she could count on her brother. With that, Anika realized that the first day of school might not be dreadful after all. "Who knew you could be so helpful?"

5 The sentence below was a third person narration. Rewrite this sentence as a first person narration.

"Too bad that was all in my imagination," Anika whispered as she leaped out of bed, disappointed that summer vacation was over.

Write your answer on the lines below.


6 Which detail from the passage best shows that Anika is feeling uneasy and unsure about middle school?

A. "Anika," cried the nervous voice of Anika’s father from downstairs.

B. Sure, most of her fifth grade classmates had moved on with her from their final year at Jefferson Elementary School.

C. "Great," Anika said with dismay as she dashed to the kitchen table. "Just another thing to worry about."

D. "Thanks," Anika replied with a laugh. She and Sharad had their differences, but this time she knew she could count on her brother.
A Berry Healthy Drink

Four a Day

Over the past few decades, we have learned about the food pyramid. The second row of the pyramid shows us that we need to eat four servings of fruit and vegetables every day. How many people can honestly say that they eat that much fruit? Even though it may seem difficult to munch on four pieces of fruit every day, it is possible. How, you ask? You can bring together many healthy fruits into a tasty smoothie drink. It is really easy to make and really delicious to drink!

Smooth and Easy Steps

This easy recipe will capture your taste buds! It is unbelievably healthy because it is filled with fruits that have many vitamins. Even if you have never tried some of these ingredients, they are guaranteed scrumptious winners. Be sure to look at the nutrition information at the bottom of the page.

First, you need to gather all the ingredients. This smoothie is easy to make because it is a "one cup" drink. You need one cup of frozen blueberries, one cup of frozen raspberries, one cup of pomegranate juice, one ripe banana, one cup of yogurt, and one cup of berry–flavored sherbet. You can also add two tablespoons of honey for extra sweetness. All of the berries in this recipe are full of "antioxidants" that slow down damage done to your body.

Next, place all the ingredients into a blender. Blend on medium until the ingredients mix together. Then, blend on high for thirty seconds or until smooth. Finally, your smoothie is done and ready to drink. It's as easy as 1–2–3.

Smoothie Nutrition Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Nutrients</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>Vitamin C and Vitamin K</td>
<td>Protect body from sicknesses, Allows blood to clot normally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Manganese and Vitamin C</td>
<td>Make strong bones, Protect body from sicknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomegranate</td>
<td>Vitamin C and Phosphorous</td>
<td>Protect body from sicknesses, Necessary for cell growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>Potassium</td>
<td>Helps muscles contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt</td>
<td>Acidophilus</td>
<td>Helps with digestion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Start Today

As you can see, this smoothie recipe is very healthy. There are many other easy recipes you can find to make a healthy drink. Check out other flavorful fruits you can put in your smoothie: strawberries, peaches, blackberries, pears, oranges, pineapples, and coconuts. It's easy, it's healthy, and it's yummy!
7 The main idea of the last paragraph of "A Berry Healthy Drink" is to explain
A. the health benefits of the different ingredients in a smoothie.
B. the steps used to make the berry smoothie.
C. that there are other ingredients that may be used to make healthy smoothies.
D. that it is healthy to find ways to add fruit to one's diet.

8 What is the main idea of "A Berry Healthy Drink"?
A. to describe the different ways to make various smoothies
B. to describe the health benefits of berry smoothies
C. to describe how berries can be used to make different foods
D. to describe the ways the major food groups help the body

9 How does the use of a table help the reader better understand the section "Smooth and Easy Steps"?
A. It points out unusual words that the reader may not understand.
B. It helps the reader visualize what the smoothie looks like.
C. It demonstrates how to make a smoothie.
D. It shows that the fruits in the smoothie are healthy and full of vitamins.

10 Why is the word "antioxidant" surrounded by quotation marks in the third paragraph?
A. to show that the word has more than one meaning
B. to show that the word may be unfamiliar to the reader
C. to show that it is a foreign word
D. to quote the words of a speaker