

## Reptile and Amphibian Care

**Suggested Grade Levels:** K-6

**Subject:** Science/Language Arts

**Character:** Responsibility

**Materials and technology to be used:**

- “My Reptile/Amphibian Care Sheet” – **x1 per student**
- Example(s) of habitats (real or photos) – **x1 or more**
- Computer with projection capabilities – **x1**
- Paper and pencils – **x1 per student**
- Sticky notes – **x1 per student**
- Articles (listed below) – **x1 of each per student (grades 3+)**

**Objective(s):**

Students will explore the differences and similarities between reptiles and amphibians. Students will gain knowledge about their care through various research methods.

**Anticipatory Set/Hook:**

Have a real reptile or amphibian habitat (empty or with the animal) set up at the front of the room. If you do not have access to a reptile and/or its habitat, display a photo. Feel free to contact the [Nebraska Humane Society's Education Department](#) to see if they can assist – **402-444-7800 ext 2214**. Ask students: “What do you think may live in here?” Call on volunteers and listen to a few guesses. Tell students that today they are going to get to discover some exciting facts about reptiles and amphibians and learn about how to take care for them properly. Ask students to give a thumbs up if they have any pet reptiles or amphibians at home, allow time to share if desired.

**Lesson Beginning:**

1. Define *reptile* and *amphibian* (write these definitions on the board):

Reptile = a cold-blooded vertebrate animal that breathes air and usually has skin covered with scales or bony plates.

Amphibian = a cold-blooded vertebrate animal that has gills and lives in water as larvae but breathes air as an adult. The word “amphibian” means two-lives, one in the water and one on land.

2. Ask students to “Partner Pyramid”. Once they are in pairs, ask students to brainstorm different types of reptiles and amphibians. They may wish to write their thoughts down on paper.

**Partner Pyramid** = Students simply raise a hand above their head and walk the room until they find a partner. Once they find a partner, their hands meet up high to form a “pyramid”. Their hands cannot come apart, and the discussion does not begin, until the pharaoh (teacher) approves of the “pyramid” pair.

3. Call on each group to share their thoughts. Discuss. Write the different examples of reptiles and amphibians on the board in two separate columns or lists. Some examples include:

### Reptiles

**Snakes** – Corn Snake, King Snake, Ball Python

**Turtles/Tortoises** – African Desert Tortoise, Red-Eared Slider, Box Turtle

**Lizards** – Green Iguana, Chameleon, Leopard Gecko, Bearded Dragon, Tokay Gecko

### Amphibians

**Frogs/Toads** – African Dwarf Frog, Firebellied Toad, White’s Tree Frog

**Salamanders** – Axolotl, Tiger Salamander

**Newts** – Fire Belly Newt, Eastern Newt

### **Middle of Lesson:**

1. Explain that reptiles and amphibians share many similarities, but they also have outstanding differences.
2. **Older students:** Print copies of the articles below for each student. Split the students up into groups of three. Engage them in an “Article Hunt.” Have students read the following articles in their groups and respond by doing the following...

-Highlight any reptile/amphibian similarities you find in **green** and differences in **red**.

-Put a “!” by any information you find SUPER interesting and a “?” by any confusing information.

-Circle two to three facts that you would like to share with the class.

a. <https://www.sheddaquarium.org/stories/amphibian-or-reptile-here-s-the-difference#:~:text=Amphibians%20and%20reptiles%20might%20seem,are%20vertebrates%E2%80%94animals%20with%20backbones.>

b. <https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/news-events/the-buzz/what-s-the-difference->

[reptile-vs-amphibian](#)

- **Younger students:** browse through different pictures together on the internet to help discover similarities and differences between these two types of animals. You may wish to project one of the above articles onto the board and highlight/discuss it verbally, together.
- 3. Using poster paper, create a large Venn Diagram as a class. This will help summarize all the information that students gathered from the articles and/or internet photo search. Allow each group an opportunity to share their facts for the diagram. Display the poster somewhere in the classroom or hallway for all to see.

**End of Lesson:**

1. Have all students go back to their individual desk.
2. Ask students to pick one type of reptile or amphibian that they would like to learn more about. (They may reference the list of reptiles/amphibians on the board for an idea.)
3. Review different research methods that your students may be familiar with – i.e.. looking up information in books, online, kid-friendly research apps on tablets, interviewing an “expert”, etc.
4. Have students utilize one or more of these familiar research methods to complete the “My Reptile/Amphibian Care Sheet.”
  - The “My Reptile/Amphibian Care Sheet” may be too advanced for younger elementary students. With students grades K-1, you may wish to complete this activity as a whole class. Or younger students could practice list writing and simply list or draw out interesting facts that they learn from their research.
5. Allow all students an opportunity to share their care sheets with the entire class. Hang these up around the classroom.

-You may wish to have students share their work/learn from each other in a modified “Gallery Walk” experience (this will require additional planning and questions/responses).

**Gallery Walk** = <https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/gallery-walk>

**Closure:**

1. Provide students with 1 min to reflect on what they have learned.
2. Have students complete an “Exit Ticket” before leaving the lesson: Pass out a sticky note to each

student and ask them to write about why it is important to respect all reptiles and amphibians no matter how we personally feel about them (like or dislike, creepy or cool). Ask for a few volunteers to share out loud.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Reptile/Amphibian Care Sheet

Circle one.

Species (type of reptile/amphibian) = \_\_\_\_\_

Type of habitat (circle all that apply):    Tank            Terrarium            Other Vivarium

Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Humidity: \_\_\_\_\_% to \_\_\_\_\_%

What equipment is necessary to maintain proper temperature and humidity?

\_\_\_\_\_

Does this animal require UVA/UVB light?    Yes    No

Does this animal need large amounts of water in its habitat?    Yes    No

Describe the substrate needed at the bottom of the habitat:

\_\_\_\_\_

List two safe plants that can go into this animal's habitat...

- 1.
- 2.

Diet = \_\_\_\_\_ (+) calcium  
and vitamins

How often do you feed this animal? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture: