

AUSTRALIAN SNAKES

U P C L O S E



TEACHERS' NOTES



BLURB

Snakes smell with their tongues, sleep with their eyes open and feel heat with pits in their faces. Get up close to Australian snakes, some of the most unique species in the world.

WRITING STYLE

Australian Snakes Up Close addresses the student reader, inviting them into the world of snakes. The text takes complicated facts about snakes and simplifies them as much as possible to suit the primary reading level. Each spread is dedicated to a particular theme, such as history, habitat, characteristics and diet. Each theme is covered in a paragraph or two, aiming to inform but not overwhelm the reader.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Accompanied by stunning images from some of the world's best photographers, *Australian Snakes Up Close* offers an in-depth look at some of Australia's most iconic snakes, allowing students to study snakes in detail. The images on each spread link directly to the information in the text and are designed to offer engaging visual insight into the lives of snakes.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Australian Curriculum
AC9SFU01
AC9S1U01
AC9S3U01
AC9S4U01

Victorian Curriculum
VC2S2U01
VC2S2U02
VC2S2U03
VC2S4U01
VC2S4U02

LEARNING AREAS

English/Literacy
Science
Biology
Evolution
Geography
Conservation and Sustainability
Australian History
Indigenous Studies

BEFORE READING

- Look closely at the book's front and back covers.
 - Can you spot the title, author, illustrator, blurb and spine?
 - What predictions can you make about the book?
 - Where might you find this book in the library?
 - Discuss the title and the cover image. What clues do they offer about the book?
- Before reading, discuss what students already know about snakes. Consider the following:
 - Where do they live? Can you find snakes all around the world? Why or why not?
 - What do they eat?
 - What colour are they?
 - How big are they?
 - What type of animal is a snake? (Note: a snake is a reptile.)
- Before reading, discuss with your students what their opinions on snakes are. Make a list of words that students associate with snakes.
- Discuss the cover image of the book. What does it tell us about what kind of book this is?
- Ask the students if they can think of any movies, books or other media in which snakes have been depicted. How are they typically depicted?
- Have the students seen a snake before?
- Ask students whether they know what they should do if they encounter a snake in the wild.

WHILE READING

- Ask students to highlight or notice words, captions or descriptions that stand out to them while reading the text.
- Ask students to make a list of the words they do not understand, and to prepare questions.
- Ask students what the book does well in helping them to navigate the text.
- Encourage students to ask clarifying questions throughout.
- Are there any images or spreads that stand out to students?



AFTER READING

- Did student know many of the facts in the book?
- Did the students have a favourite snake? Ask them to give reasons.
- Have any of the students changed their perception of snakes? Do snakes seem less bad/evil/dangerous now?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. There are more than 4000 species of snake around the world. How many can students name, either from the book or their own experience? Discuss with students why might there be so many different species of snakes. Why might they all have such different features?
2. What do snakes eat?
3. Snakes are found in many habitats across Australia. Ask students to brainstorm a list of habitats in which snakes are found.
4. What are the different families of snakes? What is the largest family?
5. What other reptile do scientists believe snakes evolved from?
6. What are snake scales made from? What part of the human body is made from the same material?
7. What is the term used for snakes' periodic shedding of skin? Why do snakes do this?
8. What do snakes on dry land do to help shed their skin? What do snakes at sea do?



9. What are the different types of scales found on a snake? What differences between the types of scales can students come up with?
10. Why do snakes flick their tongues in and out of their mouths?
11. What is Australia's largest snake? How long can it grow up to?
12. How do snakes reproduce?
13. Are snakes aggressive animals? When do they attack humans? What should students do if they see snakes in the wild?

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

- Ask students to select something they have learnt about snakes that they want to research more of. Think of interesting or original ways to present this research – in a factfile, an info report, a multimedia presentation, etc.
- There are many species of snakes not talked about in this book. Have students research a species of their choice, making sure to highlight the similarities and differences of each.
- There are many venomous species of snake in Australia. Have students research what to do in the case of a snake bite.
- Snakes appear in different cultural stories across the world. Have students research a cultural relationship of their choice (eg Indigenous Australian, Ancient Greek, Ancient Egyptian, Christian etc).
- Did you enjoy *Australian Snakes Up Close*? What did/didn't you like about it? Write a review of the book, making sure to include suggestions for what you would have liked to have seen included.



FOR LOWER LEVELS: CONNECT SNAKES AND HABITATS

Ask students to connect each snake with its habitat. Ask them to refer to the book as a reference guide. As a bonus round, ask them to include which Australian states or territories the snakes are commonly found in.

BRAHMINY BLIND SNAKE



RAINFOREST TREES



STATES/TERRITORIES

STATES/TERRITORIES

GREEN TREE SNAKE



REMOTE DESERT AREAS



STATES/TERRITORIES

STATES/TERRITORIES

ARAFURA FILE SNAKE



SOIL



STATES/TERRITORIES

STATES/TERRITORIES

INLAND TAIPAN



FRESHWATER LAKES



STATES/TERRITORIES

STATES/TERRITORIES

FOR UPPER LEVELS: BUILD A FOOD CHAIN

Discuss ecosystems and then ask students to research a location where snakes live and build a hypothetical food chain.



Eagle



Snake



Mouse



Grain

SCHOOL INCURSION

Consider inviting a reputable reptile handler to the school to show students live snakes.

ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/facts/snakes-1>

<https://australian.museum/learn/animals/reptiles/>

<https://www.australianwildlife.org/explore-wildlife>

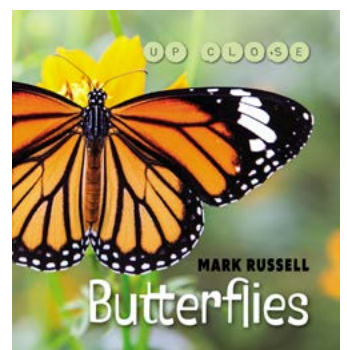
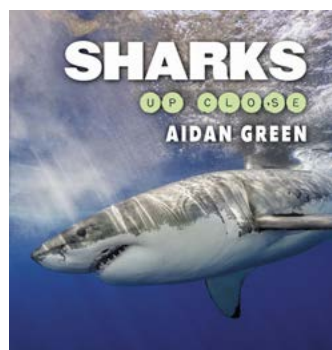
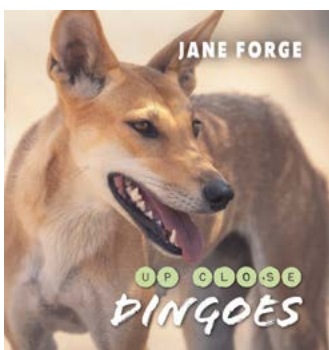
EDUCATIONAL YOUTUBE CHANNELS

Snake Discovery: <https://www.youtube.com/snakediscovery>

National Geographic Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImUgAzHSyIc>

OTHER WILD DOG TITLES

Wild Dog Books has an impressive range of books to answer questions and stimulate young minds. From fact-filled non-fiction series through to individual titles, the Wild Dog non-fiction range is the ideal complement to our selection of fiction books and award-winning picture books by Australian writers and illustrators.



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