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Amazing Animals

Venomous Snakes

Fractions and Decimals



Noelle Hoffmeister

For teachers' inspection ONLY

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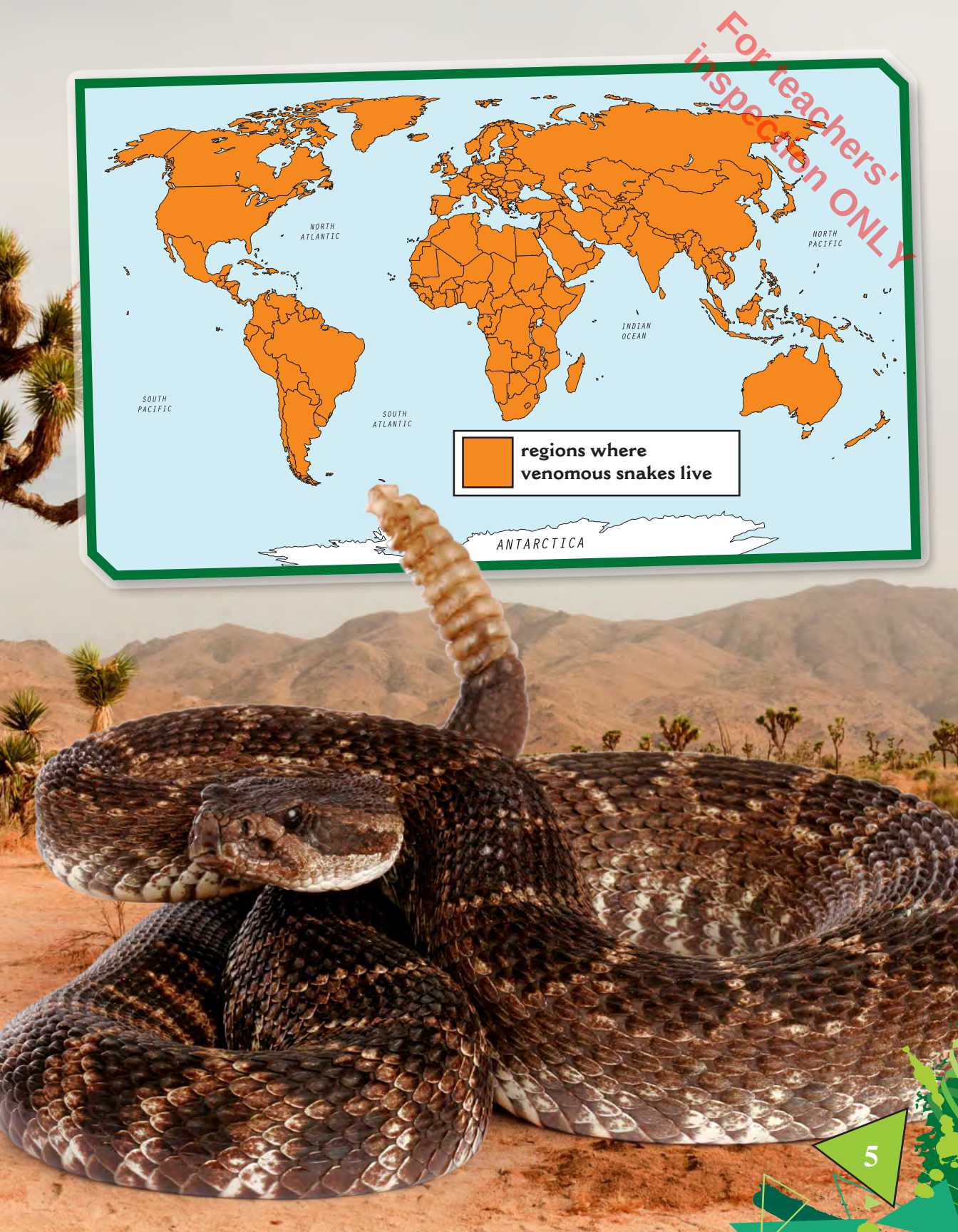
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Mysterious Venomous Snakes

Imagine walking through a hot, dry desert in North America. The blazing sun beats down on your body as you walk across the sand. To your left are green cacti covered with spiny needles. To your right, if you look closely, are lizards scurrying across the sand and hiding under rocks for shade. Small birds hop on the sand, chirping and talking to each other. You are grateful to have your water bottle with you on this journey. As you stop to take a drink, you feel the cool liquid on your lips. As you step over a rock, you hear a soft rattle coming from behind you. Immediately, you freeze. You've been warned about this sound. Could it be a **venomous** snake?

Although we don't see them much, it's easy to find venomous snakes. They live on almost every **continent** in the world. Snakes don't need a lot to survive. Their two main necessities are food and warm weather for part of the year. The maps in this book show where different species of venomous snakes live. Take a look. There may be a species near you!

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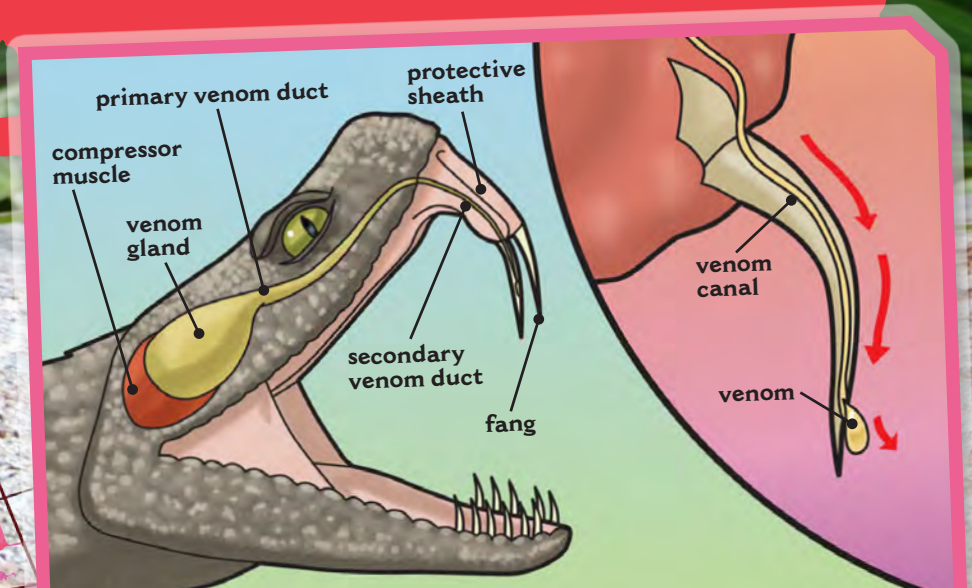


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Venomous snakes are any snake species that uses **venom**, or poison, to capture their **prey**. The teeth of these snakes are curved inward to help them hold their **prey** in their mouths. This is one way they've **adapted** over time. Adaptations are slow changes over thousands of years that help living organisms survive.

Most venomous snakes eat small animals, such as rats, mice, lizards, frogs, and birds. They even eat bird eggs. How does a snake capture its meal? First, it bites its prey. As it bites, the snake's venom moves into its hollow, tube-like teeth. The venom in this bite makes its prey stop moving. The venom flows into the body of the prey and **paralyzes** it. The snake is now ready to eat. It swallows its meal whole! Snakes have a separate lower jaw and strong tendons that help them **ingest** large food. The digestive system of snakes is so strong that it can break down eggshells and even bones!

All around the world, venomous snakes are known for their speed, **agility**, and dangerous bites. But, each species has specific features that make them unique.

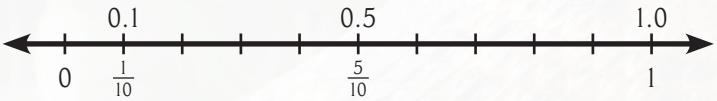


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A snake releases venom from its sharp, curved fangs.

LET'S EXPLORE MATH

Not all snakes in the world have venom. It is estimated that only $\frac{2}{10}$ of snakes are venomous. Draw the number line shown below and label the missing fractions and decimals. Then, plot a point to show $\frac{2}{10}$.



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Cunning Cobras

You wouldn't want to run into king cobras in the wild! They are the largest venomous snakes in the world. They can grow up to 18 feet (5 meters) long—the same height as 3 adults standing on top of one another! King cobras can weigh up to 20 pounds (9 kilograms) and can live up to 20 years.

A king cobra may not have a leg to stand on, but that doesn't stop it from standing tall! It has the ability to lift the front third of its body up to 6 ft. (2 m) off the ground!



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A king cobra flares its hood to warn predators.

King cobras live in warm places, such as India and Southeast Asia. They can live in water, on land, underground, or in treetops.

A distinctive feature of a king cobra is its hood. When it feels scared, it stretches out its neck ribs. At the same time, the cobra hisses. Surprisingly, this sounds like a growling dog!

Unlike other venomous snakes, a king cobra's jaws are not very strong. When it bites its prey, the snake chews on it to make sure the venom gets inside the prey's body.