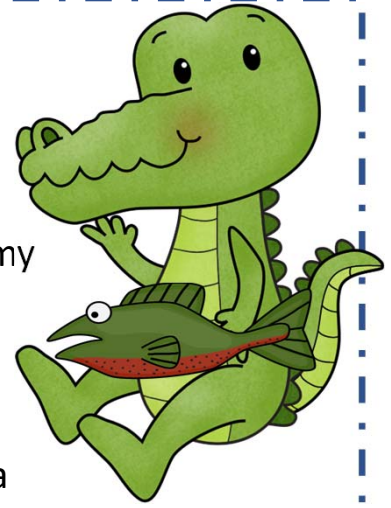


Al The Alligator



I'm Al the Alligator, and I'm here to share with you the wonders of my life in the swamp. I call the warm, murky waters of the swamp my home. It's a place full of life, where other plants and animals live. The water is my playground, and the reeds are my hiding spots. I love to lie in the sun on the riverbank, soaking up the warmth. As a carnivore, I have enjoy eating fish, turtles, and sometimes even small mammals. Hunting is a skill I've honed over time. I use my powerful jaws to catch my prey and my sharp teeth to hold on tight. While I'm often seen as a loner, we do have social interactions. We communicate with each other through grunts and hisses. During mating season, males will compete for the attention of females with displays of strength and size. When it's time to start a family, I'll dig a nest in the soft earth near the water's edge. The female will lay her eggs there, and we'll both guard them until they hatch. It's a proud moment when we see our little ones come into the world. Living in the swamp has given me some amazing adaptations. My eyes and nostrils are on top of my head, so I can see and breathe while most of my body is underwater. My webbed feet help me swim swiftly through the water. It's important to remember that alligators play an important role in our ecosystem. We help control the population of other animals and maintain a balance in nature. Our habitats need to be protected to ensure we continue to thrive.

We're not just big reptiles; we're fascinating animals with complex lives. If you ever visit a swamp or see an alligator in its natural habitat, remember to respect its space and observe from a distance.

1. Read the passage and underline any word or sentence you struggled with.
2. Answer the questions on the following page.

Answer according to the reading passage:

- 1. Al the alligator is a carnivore which means he eats?**
 - a. vegetables and sea weed
 - b. fish and turtles and small animals
 - c. sea weeds, reeds and fish

- 2. Alligators love to lie?**
 - a. in the sun
 - b. in the water
 - c. in the sand

- 3. Alligators communicate with:**
 - a. songs
 - b. growls
 - c. grunts and hisses

- 4. Why are their eyes and nostrils on top of their head?**
 - a. so they can see their prey
 - b. to see and breathe and keep their body underwater
 - c. to beware of their predators

- 5. Webbed feet help alligators:**
 - a. keep their balance in the water
 - b. swim swiftly through the water
 - c. hold on to their prey

At the Alligator

Open Response Questions

Open Response Questions for Thinking Skills:

1. Inferring
2. Making Connections
3. Summarizing
4. Visualizing

1. Why are alligators important to the ecosystem?
 2. Compare the life of the alligator in the swamp to that of another animal that lives in the swamp (*fish, turtle, frog*).
 3. List 5 things you learned from this reading passage.
 4. Describe a day in the life of an alligator.
- Explain how an alligator survives in its environment.
 - Why do you think so many people are afraid of alligators?
 - What do you think an alligator's favorite dinner is and why?
 - Find out 5 more interesting facts about alligators.
 - If you were an alligator, what would the hardest part of your day be?
 - Do you think alligators have any enemies or predators? Explain.
 - Describe with 5 details the alligator's habitat.