



# Student Worksheet ANSWERS

## Tarantula Level

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

### SAFARI ROOM (located in the center of the Sky Dome)

1. There is a vine covering an archway over the path called Bougainvillea. Where is it native to? Brazil
2. What mineral comprises the large pink boulders in the waterfall? Rose quartz
3. Compare and contrast the tortoises vs. the turtles in this room. What's different or the same about their shells, legs, and heads? The tortoises, adapted to live on land, have stumpy legs, higher domed and heavier shells, and blunt heads. The turtles, better suited to life in the water, have webbed feet with long claws, flatter & lighter weight shells, and more streamlined heads. Both types have shells, beaks, and scaly legs.
4. An adaptation is a characteristic that helps an organism to be better suited for its environment. Describe 2 adaptations of the parrots, if present: Parrots have many adaptations, including bright colors (to blend into brightly colored foliage), feathers (for flight and insulation), strong beaks (to crack open nuts, peel fruits, and climb branches), loud voices (to be heard through dense forests), two toes in front and two in back (to better grip onto branches), and excellent vision (to find food and avoid predators).

### MEZZANINE (upstairs level of the Sky Dome)

5. List 3 native South Dakota snakes that are on display: Our display may include the Prairie Rattlesnake, Bull Snake, Eastern Yellow-Bellied Racer, Wandering Garter Snake, Plains Garter Snake, Smooth Green Snake, and Pale Milk Snake
6. The Black Mamba is the second-longest venomous snake in the world. How long can it get? 14 feet. What is the longest venomous snake? King Cobra
7. If you needed Boomslang skin for a polyjuice potion, where in the world would you go to look for some? This is a Harry Potter reference – the Boomslang is native to tropical Africa, south of the Sahara desert
8. List 2 differences between alligators and crocodiles:

Alligators	Crocodiles
Strongly prefer freshwater	Can live in fresh and saltwater
Wider, shorter head with blunt U-shaped snout	Most have longer, narrow V-shape snout, eyes farther forward on head
Only found in Southeast US and China	Found in Africa, Australia, and America
Mouth closed: only upper teeth are visible	Mouth closed: upper and lower teeth visible

9. What shape are the pupils on the Asian Vine Snakes? They are horizontal
10. Why is the Snorkel-nosed Viper sometimes called the “hundred pacer?” It refers to the mistaken local belief that, after a bite, the victim will only be able to walk 100 steps before dying

#### **LOWER RING** (downstairs level of the Sky Dome)

11. What color do Flat Rock Scorpions turn under blacklight? Bright green
12. Is a tarantula an herbivore, omnivore, or carnivore? Carnivore
13. What is the main threat to the Fiji Island Banded Iguana? Habitat destruction, primarily from goats that were released on their islands
14. How many people have died from Gila monster bites? Zero
15. How does the Mata Mata turtle eat? It opens its mouth quickly, expands its neck, and sucks fish into its gullet like a vacuum.
16. Our curator Ken Earnest hatched the world’s first captive born animals of this species of critically endangered crocodile in 1978. Which species is it? Cuban Crocodile

#### **SNAKE SHOW**

17. Why are reptiles called “cold-blooded?” Reptiles don’t actually have cold blood, but they can’t keep themselves warm with just their metabolism like mammals and birds do. They are ectotherms – they rely on their environment to help them heat up and cool them down.
18. How do snakes like pythons kill their prey? Pythons are constrictors. They bite their prey to get a grip on it, quickly wrap it up in their coils, then begin to squeeze. They squeeze tight enough that there is no room for the animal to breathe, and it dies of asphyxiation.
19. What is the difference between a viper (like a rattlesnake) and an elapid (like a cobra)? Both vipers and elapids have hollow fangs located in the front of the mouth. In the elapids, the fangs are smaller and fixed in place. In the vipers, the fangs are longer and are on a hinge, so they can be folded up into the roof of the mouth when not in use.
20. TRUE OR FALSE?
  - a. All snakes are carnivores. TRUE
  - b. The number of segments on a rattlesnake’s rattle tells you how old it is. FALSE
  - c. Prairie rattlesnakes can get up to 12 feet long. FALSE
  - d. The Inland Taipan has the most toxic venom yet discovered. TRUE
  - e. Cobras have excellent hearing. FALSE

**BONUS QUESTION: VERY HARD!!!** What is a snake’s favorite subject in school?  
Hiss-tory!