



Name _____

Date _____

GECKO LIZARDS

Gecko lizards are part of the reptile family. The definition of a reptile is a cold-blooded animal that creeps by moving on the belly or by means of small and short legs. Did you know that a gecko lizard is the only lizard that has a voice? That's right. A gecko lizard makes a squeaking or clicking noise that sounds like "gecko." That's how the lizard got its name. Gecko lizards are nocturnal, which means that they are active during the night. This is why they have excellent vision.

Gecko lizards have sticky toe pads that allow them to climb well even on smooth surfaces. There is a type of gecko lizard that can fly through the air. These are called "flying geckos." These lizards have a flap of skin on the abdomen, which works like a bird's wing.

Gecko lizards can grow to be 14 inches long! The wide tail of the lizard helps store fat. The lizard has a long tongue that it uses to clean itself—especially the membrane that covers its eyes. These lizards are carnivores, which means that they eat meat. Crickets and cockroaches are a big part of its diet, but a gecko lizard will also eat young birds, eggs, and tiny mammals out at night. The snake is the main predator of the gecko lizard. If it is caught by the tail, the gecko lizard will let its tail go. The tail will flop and flail as the lizard gets away. The lizard will eventually grow another tail.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. How did the gecko lizard get its name?
 - a. its spotted back
 - b. by the sound it makes
 - c. where the gecko lizard lives
 - d. the manner in which it eats
2. What is the meaning of the word *carnivore*?
 - a. meat eater
 - b. other lizards
 - c. rodents and small mammals
 - d. plant eater
3. How does the flap of skin help the flying lizard fly?
 - a. It fights gravity.
 - b. It emits a powerful force.
 - c. It emits an odor in defense.
 - d. It works similarly to a wing on a bird.
4. After reading the passage, which reptile below would you guess is most like the gecko lizard?
 - a. snake
 - b. horny toad
 - c. tortoise