 nakes Rattle! Snakes Molt! Now You Try It!

Supplemental activities

Explore Snake Skin Adaptations

Students look at various snake books or slides and examine different snake skin adaptations.

Camouflage-hiding from predators and hiding to stalk prey i.e. copperhead snake, western cottonmouth

Mimicry-edible snake species looking like dangerous species, i.e. the Scarlet Kingsnake having similar coloring and banding as the venomous Coral Snake

Rattlesnake Rattler-found at the tip of the tail, rattlesnakes use this adaptation to warn potential aggressors to back off or to distract prey

Have students draw a picture of a snake that uses one of the adaptations discussed.

Not just Snakes!

Many spiders and insects molt out of their exoskeletons as they grow. Show slides of grasshoppers, tarantulas, etc. molting or read the book “Bugs Up Close” by Diane Swanson and discuss how the exoskeleton usually splits down the back.

Students put on an oversized button down shirt backward, do not button, overlap the sides of the shirt so it lays down in the back. Ask the child to get out of the shirt or molt, without using their hands. Very similar to our snake activity, but now your students get to be spiders or insects!

Other Reptiles Too!

Alligators and Crocodiles molt too, but their skin comes off in individual scales. Put a small amount of Elmer’s glue on the students’ hands or on their forearm, let it dry and have them peel it off. Discuss how a small patch of “skin” came off and not the entire body length of skin like a snake’s!