

Oxbow Phenomena: Snake Swallowing

Snakes have strong muscles running along their ribs and vertebrate that help them push prey down their esophagus and into their digestive tract. Most snakes do have teeth, however, they do not use their teeth to chew their prey but rather swallow it whole. Snakes will usually swallow their prey item head first for easier digestion and will “walk” the muscles of their mouths from side to side for consumption (similar to moving furniture, “walking” it from side to side). Since snakes are ectothermic, they have a slow metabolism and at Oxbow eat generally one meal every other week.

Grade	Standard	Guiding Question(s)	How to include in lesson?
1st	S1L1.Students will investigate the characteristics and basic needs of plants and animals.	What does a snake need to survive?	-Use to discuss what a snake may eat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try squeezing a plastic toy into the neck of a balloon -Discuss how rodents are an important part of many animals' diets and how snakes help keep rodents under control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of at least 5 other animals that may eat mice and other rodents • Imagine what it would be like to eat like a snake. Tell a story of how you hunted and caught your food.
4th	S4L2 Students will identify factors that affect the survival or extinction of organisms such as adaptation, variation of behaviors (hibernation) and external features (camouflage and protection).	How does a snake's covering help with survival? How would you describe the locomotion or movement of the snake? How can snakes shelter, protect, or defend themselves?	-Discuss behavioral adaptations that affect behaviors such as mating, evasion of predators, and alerting of weather conditions, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of 5+ physical adaptations you observe on the snake. -Can use to analyze how the structure of the snake's body helps it to survive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw a picture of a snake's adaptations and write how they help it survive.
5th	S5L2. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information showing that some characteristics of organisms are inherited and other characteristics are acquired.	How is this feeding behavior an inherited or acquired behavior? How is hunting an inherited or acquired behavior?	-Use to differentiate between anatomically and behaviorally different traits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw the snake and label its anatomy and how it uses its body parts for certain behaviors (try to draw the internal

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			<p>structures of the animal and what processes they are responsible for).</p> <p>-Use to discuss different types of traits including reproductive, feeding, survival, locomotion, etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a list of some of the behaviors that you see in the video and if they were passed to offspring from parents or learned through interaction with environment.
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