

## National Geographic Readers: Deadly Predators

By: Melissa Stewart

Come face to face with sharks, wolves, tigers, and many more predators.

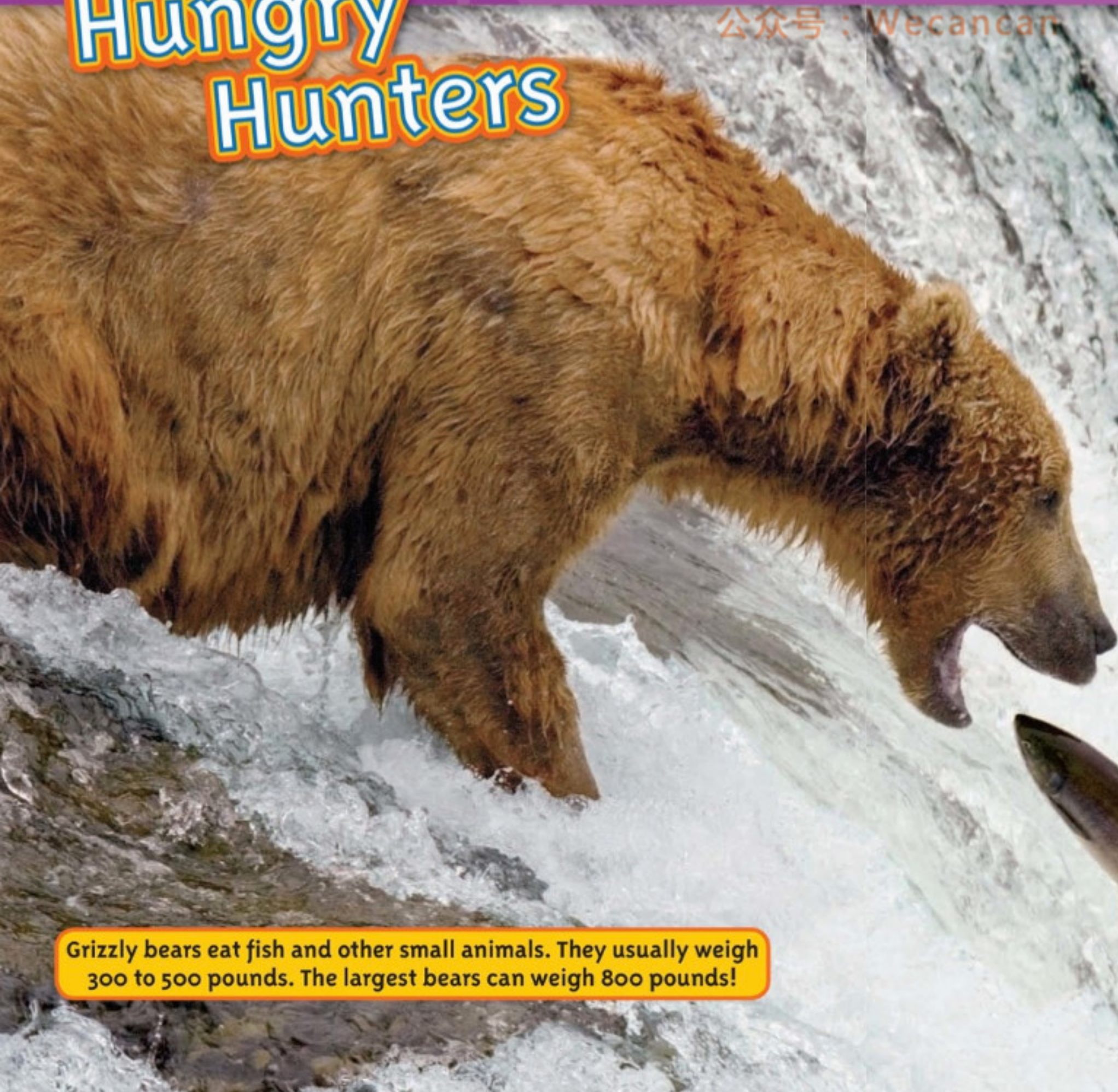
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Age Range	Length	Lexile <sup>®</sup> Measure	AR Level

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# Hungry Hunters

公众号：Wecancan



Wolves chase.  
Sharks attack.  
Bears lunge.

All these animals are predators. They're all after the same thing.

Meat. They need it to live and grow.

Grizzly bears eat fish and other small animals. They usually weigh 300 to 500 pounds. The largest bears can weigh 800 pounds!

## Word Bite

**PREDATOR:** An animal that hunts and eats other animals

# Dogs in the Wild

公众号: Wecancan

Wolves are members of the dog family. So are foxes, coyotes, and African wild dogs. All of these dogs are powerful predators.

Big ears help wild dogs hear their prey. Sensitive noses help the dogs sniff out food.

Wild dogs also have large teeth and strong jaws.

They can kill prey larger than themselves.

## Word Bite

**PREY:** An animal that is eaten by another animal

A coyote has 42 teeth. Some can tear flesh. Others can crush bone.



African wild dogs hunt in packs.



An arctic fox stalks its prey.



# Cats in the Wild

公众号：Wecan

Q

What happened when the tiger swallowed a ball of yarn?

It had mittens.

A

Thirty-six kinds of cats live in the wild. And they're all expert hunters.

The rusty-spotted cat is the smallest. It weighs less than a half-gallon jug of milk.

The rusty-spotted cat lives in India. At night, it hunts for birds, mice, lizards, and frogs.



8



Siberian tigers can eat up to 80 pounds of meat at one time.

9



Female lions hunt in a group. They work together to get a meal.

Most cats live alone. But lions live in a family group called a pride.

The males protect the group.

The females do all the hunting.

**Word Bite**

**PRIDE:** A family group of lions

A cougar has long, strong legs. But it can't run fast or far. It sneaks up on prey. Then it jumps on the animal and bites its neck.



Cougars have sharp teeth. They chop prey into bite-size bits.

# Polar Power

公众号：Wecancan

Q

What do you call a polar bear with earmuffs?

Whatever you want. It can't hear you!

A

The polar bear is the largest bear in the world. It's also the most deadly. Polar bears use their sharp teeth and huge paws to catch prey.

They hunt alone. Polar bears mostly eat seals snatched from holes in the ice. But sometimes they eat small animals, too.

A polar bear has one of the world's best noses. It comes in handy when sniffing out dinner.



# Mini-monsters

These predators may be small, but they sure are deadly!



## Giant Water Bug

A giant water bug hunts fish and frogs, snakes and snails. It jabs prey with its mouthparts. Then it sucks out the animal's insides!



## Wind Scorpion

This little critter has huge jaws and runs like the wind. It chases down termites, beetles, and even lizards. This one caught a cricket.

## Short-tailed Shrew

This shrew's spit is full of venom. The shrew uses the spit to paralyze its prey.



## Army Ants

A group of army ants looks like a moving carpet. The group can be as wide as a street. It can be as long as a football field. The ants kill and eat everything in their path.



## Word Bite

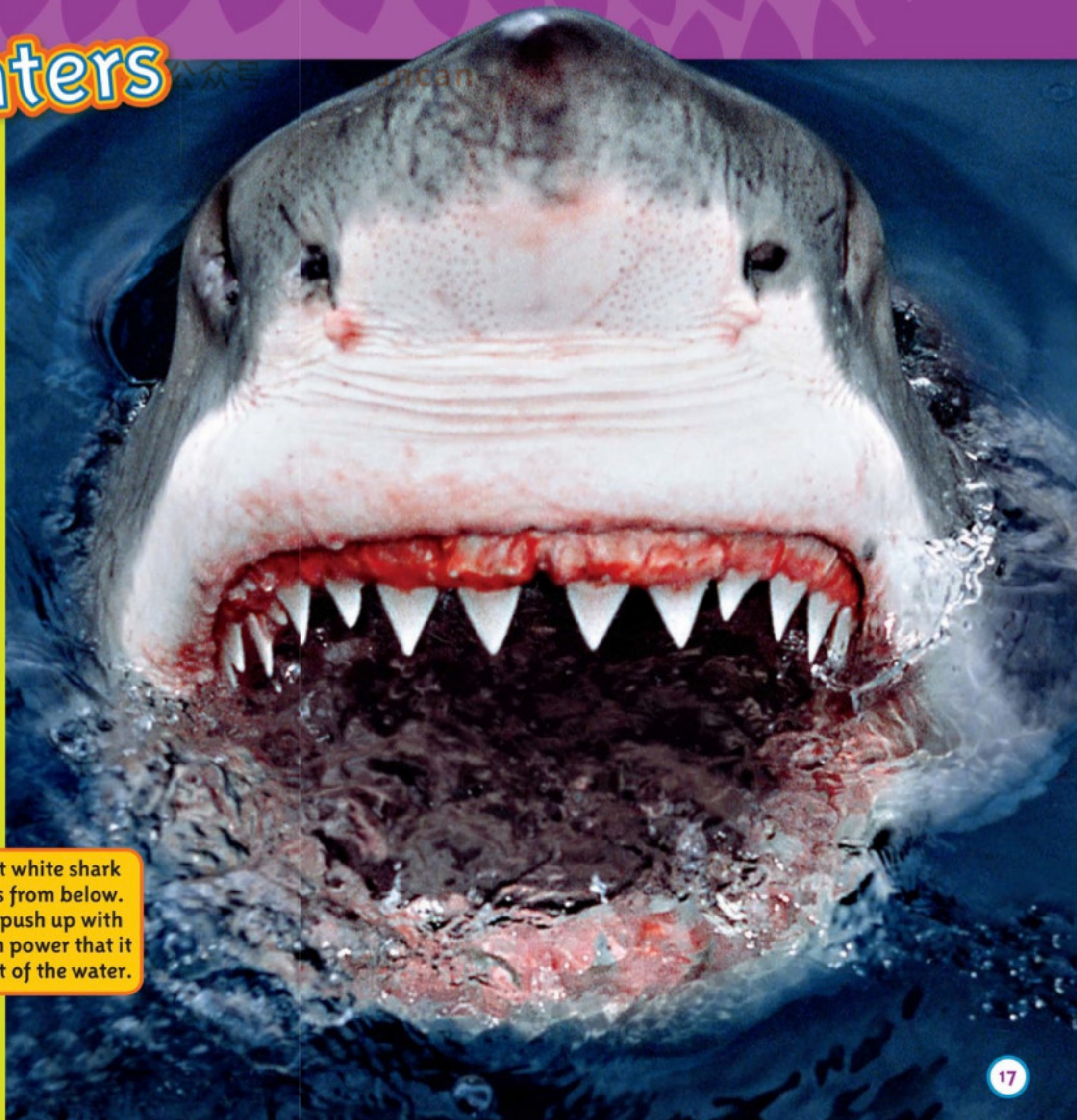
**PARALYZE:** To make unable to move  
**VENOM:** A liquid some animals make that is used to kill or paralyze other animals

# Ocean Hunters

The great white shark can go weeks without eating. But when it gets hungry . . . look out!

The fierce fish has up to 3,000 teeth. It uses them to grab fish, seals, sea lions, and dolphins.

A great white shark attacks from below. It may push up with so much power that it rises out of the water.



Orcas attack a gray whale.



Orcas are called killer whales. Why? Because they eat all kinds of prey—birds, sea turtles, seals, and even sharks.

Orcas have two ways of hunting. They can surround a large animal and attack as a group. Then they share the meal.



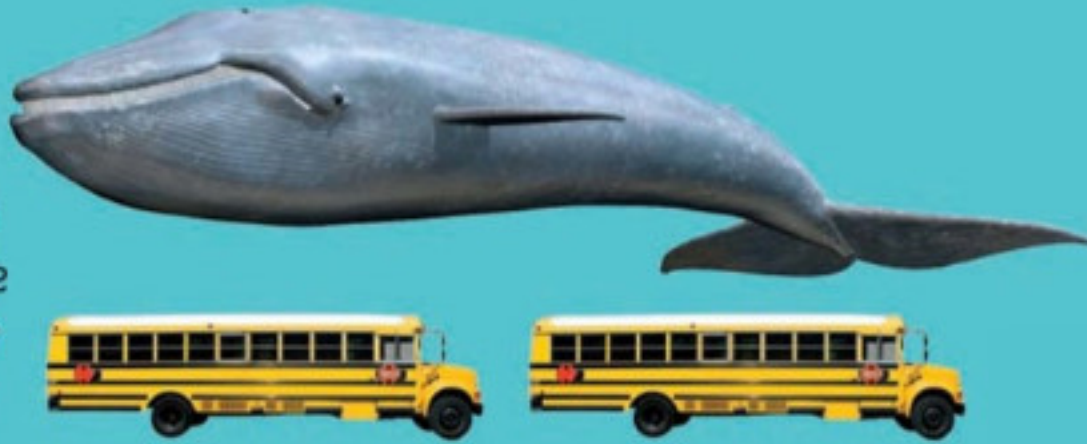
Orcas can also push a lot of fish into a tight ball. Then the orcas take turns eating the prey. This is called a bait ball.

# Super-predators

公众号：Wecanacan

## Biggest

A blue whale is longer than two school buses. But it eats shrimp-like critters no bigger than your pinky!



## Fastest on Land

A cheetah can run as fast as a car on the highway. It's faster than any prey.

## Fastest in the Air

How does a peregrine falcon catch prey? By diving through the air three times faster than a car on the highway.



## Strangest

A fossa looks like a cross between a squirrel and a kitten. It hunts lemurs, birds, crabs, snakes, and more.

## Longest Jumper

A cougar has powerful back legs. When it jumps from a high place, this big cat can jump the length of a pickup truck.



## Most Beautiful

A sea anemone looks like a flower. But it has tentacles with venom. They can kill fish or shrimp in seconds.

## Word Bite

**TENTACLE:** An arm-like part of an animal used to feel things or catch food

# Snakes, Lizards, and Crocodiles

公众号：Wecanacan



A black timber rattlesnake swallows a mouse.

Snakes kill their prey in different ways. Some snakes have venom in their fangs. The venom paralyzes the animals they catch. Then the snakes swallow the prey whole.

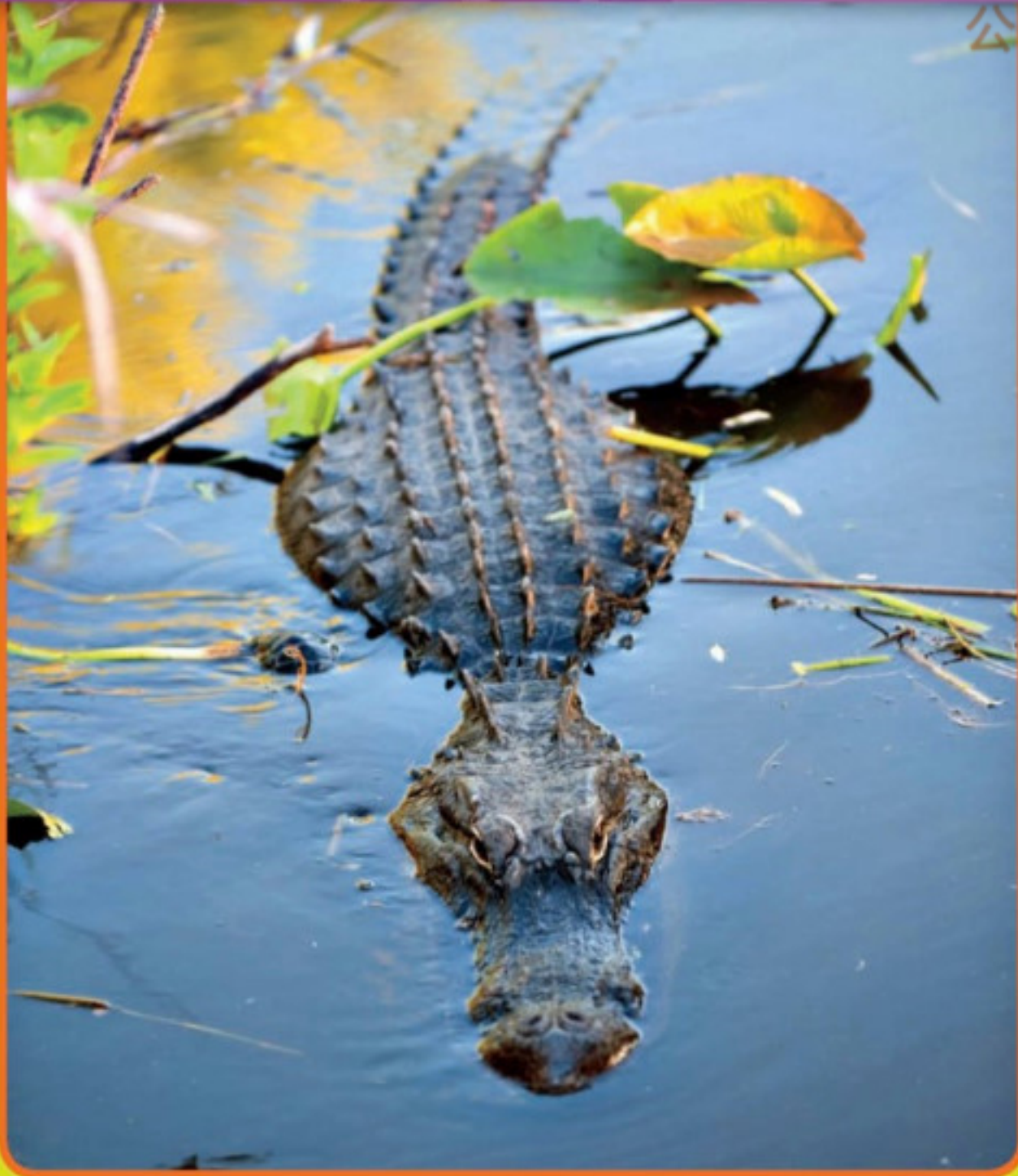
Other snakes don't use venom. The anaconda grabs an animal with its teeth. Then it curls around the prey and squeezes it to death.

Many lizards are small enough to sit in your hand. But the Komodo dragon is as big as a surfboard.

The giant lizard has 60 sharp, jagged teeth.

Its spit is even more deadly. It's full of germs that can kill prey in one bite.

The Komodo dragon is the biggest lizard alive today. It eats birds, bird eggs, monkeys, wild boar, goats, deer, and more.



How does a hungry crocodile catch its prey? It lies in the water and waits. The patient hunter can wait for hours.

When prey passes by, the croc grabs it, pulls it underwater, and waits for it to drown.

What does a crocodile eat? Almost anything—fish, birds, snakes, deer, wildebeest (below), and more.



# Perfect Predators

公众号：Wecancan

Crocs, cheetahs, wolves, sharks,  
and snakes are some of the most  
awesome predators on the planet.

But they don't hunt for fun.  
They hunt to feed themselves  
and their families.

Cheetahs are the  
fastest animals  
on land. They eat  
animals such as  
gazelles, impalas,  
hares, and young  
wildebeest.



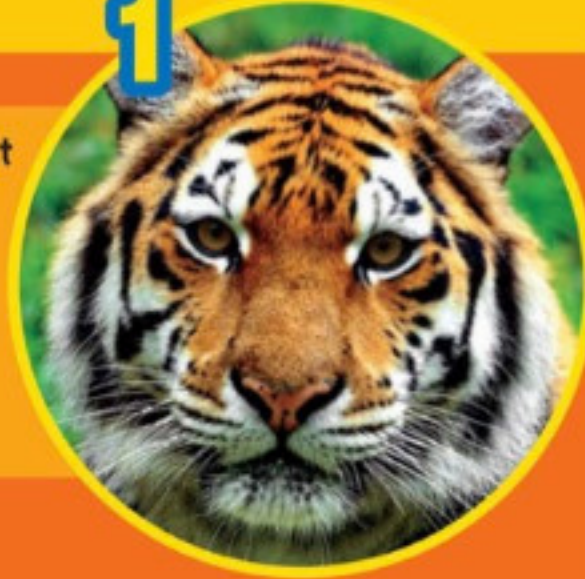
# Stump Your Parents

公众号: Wecan

Can your parents answer these questions about predators?  
You might know more than they do!

Answers are at the bottom of page 31.

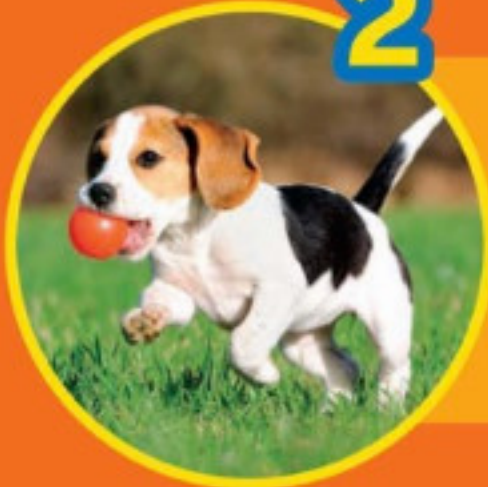
1



How much meat can some tigers eat at one time?

- A. 10 pounds
- B. 20 pounds
- C. 40 pounds
- D. 80 pounds

2



\_\_\_\_\_ are members of the dog family.

- A. Wolves
- B. Foxes
- C. Coyotes
- D. All of the above

3



Which kind of bear is the biggest in the world?

- A. Brown bear
- B. Black bear
- C. Polar bear
- D. Sun bear

4



Which predator sucks out the insides of its prey?

- A. A rusty-spotted cat
- B. A giant water bug
- C. A peregrine falcon
- D. A crocodile

5



Orcas are a kind of \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Fish
- B. Whale
- C. Insect
- D. Reptile

6



Which of these animals does not hunt in groups?

- A. Polar bear
- B. Orca
- C. Army ant
- D. Lion

7



Which predator has the most teeth?

- A. Gray wolf
- B. Giant water bug
- C. Great white shark
- D. Komodo dragon



公众号: Wecancan

**PARALYZE:** To make unable to move



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**PREY:** An animal that is eaten by another animal



**PRIDE:** A family group of lions



**TENTACLE:** An arm-like part of an animal used to feel things or catch food



**VENOM:** A liquid some animals make that is used to kill or paralyze other animals