

Year 5

When Reptiles Ruled 1

Retrieval 2b

The Age of Reptiles may have been one of the most incredible periods in Earth's history. Most scientists believe that the Age of Reptiles began about 225 million years ago and lasted for more than 160 million years. This was millions of years before the earliest humans were on Earth.

Dinosaurs dominated the Age of Reptiles. The word "dinosaur" means "terrible lizard". There were plant-eating and meat-eating dinosaurs that roamed the Earth. Both of these groups included dinosaurs in many different sizes and shapes.

Some plant-eaters were enormous. They weighed up to 180,000 pounds and grew to lengths of 80 feet or more. These giants had tiny heads and even tinier brains, which weighed less than a chicken egg. A plant-eating dinosaur's head was perched 40 feet above the ground on a long, snake-like neck. Scientists think that it would have taken at least a ton of green leaves a day to keep each of these giant creatures alive.

Plant-eating dinosaurs spent most of their time in the mud and water of lakes and rivers, where they fed on soft plants. Their nostrils were located on the top part of their tiny heads, which made it easy for the dinosaurs to breathe while they moved around in deep water. A few large, plant-eating dinosaurs walked upright. These creatures balanced themselves with their heavy tails as they walked.

One type of plant-eating dinosaur that walked upright was the "duck-billed" dinosaur. This creature got its name because its face was drawn out into a wide, flat beak, which looked very much like a duck's bill. A duck-billed dinosaur had a strange-looking crest of bone on its head. This made it look as though it were wearing a helmet. No one really knows what purpose the bony crest served, but some people think it may have been part of a giant nose that could sense approaching danger. The duck-billed dinosaur was a good swimmer. When it sensed danger, which often was a fierce meat-eating dinosaur, the duck-billed dinosaur dived into deep lake or river waters. Meat-eating hunters could not follow the plant-eating dinosaur into the water.

Questions

1 What dominated the Age of Reptiles?

2 Look in the second paragraph.

Find **three** physical features that describe what the plant-eaters **looked** like.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3 Complete the table below with facts from the text.

When the Age of Reptiles began:	
How long the Age of Reptiles lasted:	
Some plant-eaters weighed:	
The distance a plant-eater's head was from the ground:	

4 Look at the second paragraph. Which **two** types of dinosaurs lived during the Age of Reptiles?

1. _____

2. _____

5 Choose the best group of words to fit the sentences.

Draw a circle around your choice.

(a) Plant-eating dinosaurs...

could breathe
underwater

ate hard
plants

detested
water

could move around
in great depths

(b) Duck-billed dinosaurs...

originated
from ducks

were meat-eaters'
prey

wore a
helmet

could not
swim

6 Look at the paragraph beginning '*Plant-eating dinosaurs spent most of their time in the mud and water...*'

How did some of the plant-eating dinosaurs stop themselves from falling over when walking?

7 Look at the whole text.

Number the following 1–5 to show the order in which you first read about them.

scientists

terrible lizard

duck-billed dinosaur

the Age of Reptiles

meat-eating dinosaurs

8

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Dinosaurs roamed the Earth billions of years before the earliest humans.		
There were two groups of dinosaurs.		
Some plant-eaters' brains weighed less than a duck egg.		
Duck-billed dinosaurs escaped predators by diving into water.		

Answers

1 What dominated the Age of Reptiles?

Dinosaurs.

2 Look in the second paragraph.

Find **three** physical features that describe what the plant-eaters **looked** like.

(They had) a tiny head.

(They had) even tinier brains.

(They had) a snake-like neck.

3 Complete the table below with facts from the text.

When the Age of Reptiles began:	225 million years ago
How long the Age of Reptiles lasted:	160 million years
Some plant-eaters weighed:	180,000 pounds
The distance a plant-eater's head was from the ground:	40 feet

4 Look at the second paragraph. Which **two** types of dinosaurs lived during the Age of Reptiles?

Plant-eaters/plant-eating dinosaurs.

Meat-eaters/meat-eating dinosaurs.

5 Choose the best group of words to fit the sentences.

Draw a circle around your choice.

(a) Plant-eating dinosaurs...

could breathe
underwater

ate hard
plants

detested
water

could move around
in great depths

(b) Duck-billed dinosaurs...

originated
from ducks

were meat-eaters'
prey

wore a
helmet

could not
swim

6 Look at the paragraph beginning 'Plant-eating dinosaurs spent most of their time in the mud and water...'

How did some of the plant-eating dinosaurs stop themselves from falling over when walking?

They balanced themselves with their heavy tails (as they walked).

7 Look at the whole text.

Number the following 1–5 to show the order in which you first read about them.

2 scientists

3 terrible lizard

5 duck-billed dinosaur

1 the Age of Reptiles

4 meat-eating dinosaurs

8 Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Dinosaurs roamed the Earth billions of years before the earliest humans.		✓
There were two groups of dinosaurs.	✓	
Some plant-eaters' brains weighed less than a duck egg.		✓
Duck-billed dinosaurs escaped predators by diving into water.	✓	