

Reading Comprehension: Fun Facts (Grades 4–5)

Grade 4-5 · Ages 9-11 · Reading · Reading Comprehension · ★★

Read the passage, then circle the best answer for each question.

The axolotl (say: AX-oh-lot-ul) is one of the most remarkable amphibians on Earth. Unlike most salamanders, the axolotl never fully transforms into a land animal. It keeps its feathery, branch-like gills throughout its entire life, allowing it to breathe underwater. This unusual trait is called neoteny — the ability to keep juvenile features into adulthood. Axolotls are native to a single lake system near Mexico City, making them extremely rare in the wild. What truly astonishes scientists, however, is the axolotl's extraordinary ability to regenerate. If an axolotl loses a limb, part of its heart, or even portions of its brain, it can regrow them almost perfectly. Researchers study axolotls hoping to unlock secrets that could one day help humans heal serious injuries. These small, smiling creatures may hold enormous medical possibilities.

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

- (A) Axolotls are fascinating amphibians with unique abilities that interest scientists.
- (B) Axolotls are dangerous animals found all over the world.
- (C) Scientists have already used axolotls to cure human injuries.
- (D) Axolotls are the largest salamanders on Earth.

2. According to the passage, where are axolotls originally from?

- (A) The Amazon River in South America
- (B) The rivers of southern Canada
- (C) A lake system near Mexico City
- (D) Coastal waters near Japan

3. What does the word 'regenerate' mean as it is used in the passage?

- (A) To swim very quickly through water
- (B) To change color for camouflage
- (C) To breathe using feathery gills
- (D) To regrow lost or damaged body parts

- 4.** What is neoteny, according to the passage?
- (A) The ability to live both on land and in water
 - (B) The ability to keep juvenile features into adulthood
 - (C) A method of hunting prey underwater
 - (D) A type of gill found only in axolotls
- 5.** Based on the passage, why do researchers study axolotls?
- (A) To teach them to survive on dry land
 - (B) To find out why they live in only one location
 - (C) To discover how they developed their feathery gills
 - (D) To learn how their healing ability might help humans one day

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Answer: (A) Axolotls are fascinating amphibians with unique abilities that interest scientists.

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