



ALL ABOUT
AXOLOTLS

Swim, wiggle, and explore life with these amazing water salamanders!

A NONFICTION UNIT

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MEET THE AXOLOTLS!

Wiggle-wiggle! A tiny creature with feathery gills swims through the water—it's an **axolotl**! Axolotls are unusual amphibians that spend their whole lives underwater. They look like smiling salamanders with frilly heads.





WHAT AXOLOTLS ARE LIKE

Axolotls are **amphibians**, related to **salamanders**. They have soft bodies, flat tails, and tiny legs. On the sides of their heads are feathery gills that help them breathe underwater. Unlike most amphibians, axolotls do not grow into land adults; they stay in their water form their whole lives.



WHERE AXOLOTLS LIVE

Axolotls come from Mexico. They live in lakes and **canals** near Mexico City, especially in the area of Xochimilco. These waters are calm and full of plants where axolotls can hide. Today, they are rare in the wild and need protection.

FROM EGG TO ADULT

Axolotls begin life as eggs laid in the water. After hatching, the young look like tiny tadpoles. As they grow, they develop legs and their feathery **gills**. They keep their gills and stay underwater instead of changing into land salamanders.



WHAT AXOLOTLS EAT

Axolotls are **carnivores**. They eat worms, insects, small fish, and tiny water animals. They open their mouths quickly to suck in food along with water. Their sharp senses help them find **prey** in **murky** water.



HOW AXOLOTLS MOVE

Axolotls swim by wiggling their long tails from side to side. Their small legs help them crawl along the bottom of the lake. They move gently and quietly through the water. This helps them sneak up on food and avoid danger.





LIFE UNDERWATER

Axolotls spend all their time underwater. They rest among plants, rocks, and muddy bottoms. They prefer slow-moving water where they can hide easily. Living underwater keeps their skin moist and their gills working well.





HOW AXOLOTLS STAY SAFE

Axolotls use **camouflage** to stay safe. Their colors help them blend in with plants and mud. If a **predator** grabs them, they can sometimes regrow a lost leg or tail. This special healing ability helps them survive injuries.



DID YOU KNOW?

Axolotls can regrow lost body parts like legs, tails, and even parts of their heart. This amazing ability is called **regeneration**. Scientists study axolotls to learn how healing works.

QUESTION TIME!

1. (True or False) Axolotls are amphibians.
2. (True or False) Axolotls live on land.
3. (True or False) Axolotls have feathery gills.
4. (Fact or Opinion) Axolotls can regrow body parts.
5. (Fact or Opinion) Axolotls are the cutest water animals.
6. Where do axolotls live?
7. What do axolotls eat?
8. How do axolotls swim?
9. Why do axolotls stay underwater?
10. What special ability helps them heal?



ANSWERS

1. True. Axolotls are amphibians.
2. False. They live underwater.
3. True. They have feathery gills.
4. Fact. They really can regrow body parts.
5. Opinion. "Cutest water animals" is a personal idea.
6. They live in lakes and canals in Mexico.
7. They eat worms and small water animals.
8. They wiggle their tails to swim.
9. They breathe with gills and stay in water.
10. They can regrow lost body parts.



GLOSSARY

Amphibian — an animal that can live both in water and on land during its life

Axolotl — a type of salamander that lives in water and has feathery gills on the sides of its head

Camouflage — colors or patterns that help an animal blend in with its surroundings

Canal — a narrow waterway, sometimes made by people, where water flows

Carnivores — animals that eat other animals

Gill — a body part that helps some animals breathe underwater

Murky — dark, cloudy, or hard to see through

Predator — an animal that hunts other animals for food

Prey — an animal that is hunted and eaten by another animal

Regeneration — the ability to regrow a body part, such as a tail or leg

Salamander — a type of amphibian with a long body, tail, and smooth skin



FUN WITH AXOLOTLS

Q: What do you call a baby axolotl?

A: An axo-little.