



ALL ABOUT

DRAGONFLIES

Zip, zoom, and swoop with one of nature's fastest fliers!

A NONFICTION UNIT

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MEET THE DRAGONFLIES!

Zzzzip! A bright, **shimmering** insect darts above a pond—it's a dragonfly! Dragonflies are speedy, skillful **hunters** that zoom through the air like tiny helicopters. They have been on Earth for millions of years, long before dinosaurs appeared.





WHAT DRAGONFLIES ARE LIKE

Dragonflies have two pairs of long, **delicate** wings that beat so fast you can barely see them. Their big, **bulging** eyes give them almost 360-degree vision. Their bodies are long and slender, shaped like flying needles.



WHERE DRAGONFLIES LIVE

Dragonflies live near ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, and **wetlands**. They need water to lay their eggs and for their young to grow. You can find dragonflies on every continent except Antarctica. Warm, sunny days are the best times to see them **swooping** and zooming around.

FROM EGG TO DRAGONFLY

Dragonflies begin as eggs laid on plants or directly in the water. These eggs hatch into **nymphs**, which live underwater for months or even years. When it is ready, the nymph climbs out of the water, splits its skin, and the adult dragonfly emerges. This process is called **incomplete metamorphosis**.



HOW DRAGONFLIES COMMUNICATE

Dragonflies communicate mostly through movement. They flash their wings to send signals to other dragonflies. Males use special flight patterns to show off or protect their **territory**.



WHAT DRAGONFLIES EAT

Dragonflies are excellent hunters. They eat mosquitoes, flies, gnats, moths, and even smaller dragonflies. Adult dragonflies catch food in the air by using their legs like a tiny basket. **Nymphs** eat underwater creatures such as tadpoles and small fish.





LIFE BY THE WATER

Dragonflies spend much of their life near water. Adults perch on reeds or rocks to rest and warm their bodies. They swoop low over the water to hunt insects. Nymphs hide among underwater plants, waiting for prey to swim close.



KEEPING SAFE

Dragonflies stay safe using incredible speed, sharp vision, and quick turning skills. They can fly forward, backward, up, down, or hover in place. With eyes that see almost everywhere at once, dragonflies can spot danger quickly and zip away before **predators** come close.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Dragonflies can fly up to 60 kilometers (37 miles) per hour.
- They can eat hundreds of mosquitoes in a single day.
- Dragonflies have been around for over 300 million years.



QUESTION TIME!

1. (True or False) Dragonflies are insects.
2. (True or False) Dragonflies can walk well.
3. (True or False) Dragonflies go through incomplete metamorphosis.
4. (Fact or Opinion) Dragonflies live near water.
5. (Fact or Opinion) Dragonflies are the most beautiful insects.
6. Where do dragonflies lay their eggs?
7. What does a dragonfly nymph eat?
8. How do dragonflies catch food?
9. What helps dragonflies stay safe?
10. What does an adult dragonfly eat?



ANSWERS



1. True. Dragonflies are insects.
2. False. Dragonflies cannot walk well—they are built for flying.
3. True. They grow from egg to nymph to adult.
4. Fact. Dragonflies really do live near water.
5. Opinion. “Dragonflies are the most beautiful insects” is a personal belief.
6. They lay their eggs on plants or in water.
7. Nymphs eat tadpoles, small fish, and tiny underwater animals.
8. Adults catch food in the air using their legs like a basket.
9. Speed, vision, and sharp turns help them stay safe.
10. They eat mosquitoes, flies, gnats, moths, and even smaller dragonflies.

GLOSSARY

A dragonfly is perched on a reed in the upper right corner of the page. Its reflection is visible in the water below. The background is a soft-focus natural scene with reeds and water.

Bulging – sticking out or looking round and full

Delicate – soft, light, and easy to damage

Hunter – an animal that looks for other animals to eat

Incomplete metamorphosis – a life cycle with three stages: egg, nymph, and adult

Nymph – a young insect that looks like a small adult

Predator – an animal that hunts other animals for food

Shimmering – softly shining or sparkling with light

Swooping – moving quickly downward through the air

Territory – an area an animal lives in and protects

Wetland – land with a lot of water, such as marshes or swamps



FUN WITH DRAGONFLIES

Q: Why was the dragonfly such a good dancer?

A: Because it always knew how to wing it!