

Name: _____

Boa Constrictors

(You really got a hold on me)

Directions: Use the information from the story to answer the questions below. Write your answer with a complete sentence. **Underline or highlight the sentence where you found the information.**

1. A boa constrictor is not poisonous like a cobra or rattlesnake. How does a boa constrictor kill its prey **before** swallowing it?

2. Where in the world would you find boa constrictors? (not the zoo)

3. Boa constrictors are nocturnal hunters. What does that mean?

4. How big is the longest boa that has ever been found? (circle one)

A. 14 feet

B. 10 feet

C. 18 feet

D. 100 pounds

5. Which of the following does NOT describe boa constrictors? (circle one)

A. warm-blooded

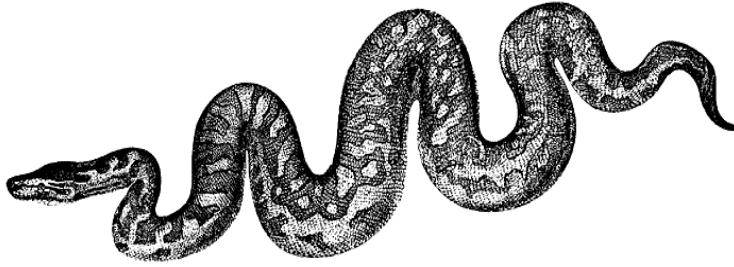
B. nocturnal

C. cold-blooded

Boa Constrictors

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Boa constrictors are amazing snakes. Like all snakes, boa constrictors are reptiles and **cold-blooded**. Boa constrictors are non-venomous (not poisonous) and must rely on other methods to kill and eat their prey. These snakes kill by constriction, wrapping their body around and squeezing the prey until it dies. (Remember, no warm hugs for these snakes)



Cold-blooded does not mean you have ice running through your veins. Cold-blooded creatures take on the temperature of their surroundings. They are warm when it is warm and cool when it is cool. These creatures move around a lot more when it is warm outside.

Not as big as anacondas, most boa constrictors can be as small as 30 inches (a little smaller than a yardstick) or as big as 10 feet. The biggest one ever found was over 18 feet long. *Use a ruler to measure out 18 feet. Pretty big, huh!* They can weigh over 100 pounds.

Boa constrictors can be found in Central and South America. *Go ahead, look them up on a map.* They will eat almost anything they can catch. They eat birds, other reptiles, monkeys, and even pigs. Their meal of choice is rodent. They are **nocturnal** hunters, searching for a meal in the dark of night. Often, they hang from trees by a cave and wait for a bat to fly by. They don't chew their food up like you and me (you do chew your food, don't you). After the prey has been suffocated, they swallow it whole. If it is a big meal, their jaws can stretch wide to get it all in. They usually live about 20 to 30 years.

Want to find out more about these cool snakes. Try these sites.

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/boa-constrictor.html>

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Animals/CreatureFeature/Boa>