

Please help Harry Potter with his homework for Hagrid's Care of Magical Creatures lesson.

Classify these vertebrates.

1. Basilisk – a huge green serpent up to 15m in length that can live to a great age. It is cold-blooded with a scaly skin and has highly venomous fangs. It has deadly dangerous eyes and anyone looking at them dies instantly. The basilisk preys on mammals, birds and some reptiles.

Answer _____

2. Centaur – this creature has the head and chest of a human and the body of a horse. It is highly intelligent and capable of thought and speech at the same level as humans. Centaurs live in the forest and give birth to live young.

Answer _____

3. Dragon – there are ten different breeds of these creatures that can grow to a size twice that of an elephant. They have scaly skin of varying colours including red, green and black. Despite being cold-blooded, adult dragons are capable of breathing fire when they feel threatened. Female dragons are known to be highly protective of their eggs.

Answer _____

4. Gnome – small animals about 30cm tall and resembling humans with large bony heads and hard feet. They infest suburban gardens and are regarded by many as a pest. They breed in garden sheds, building a nest from whatever they can find. Female gnomes give birth to up to three live gnomes and care for them in the nest until they grow to adulthood.

Answer _____

5. Griffin – ferocious creatures with the body and hind legs of a lion but the head and wings of an eagle. The hind legs and body are covered with short, wiry feathers that resemble fur. Griffins breed in high, mountainous areas, laying up to five eggs in huge nests that are built on inaccessible rocky crags.

Answer _____

6. Hippogriff – the head of a giant eagle and a body resembling a winged horse. Initially thought to be related to the griffin, these flying, feathered beasts are in fact a very different species. They lay eggs on the ground and these hatch with great speed, often less than a day after they have been laid. They are warm blooded and feed on small mammals and birds.

Answer _____

7. Merpeople – although they resemble humans, merpeople have damp smooth skin that helps them absorb oxygen. They have lungs and are able to leave the water for short periods of time, but rarely do so as they are not comfortable on land. In the spring the lakes where they live come alive with merpoles that gradually develop into tiny merchildren.

Answer _____

8. Niffler – a burrowing animal with a long snout and fluffy black fur. Nifflers are native to the British Isles and they are attracted to glittering objects. They live in burrows where they give birth to between six and eight young.

Answer _____

9. Plimpy – round in shape, these smooth skinned creatures live at the bottom of lakes and ponds, though they can occasionally creep out onto the land. They have lungs but also breathe through their skin. They use their limbs to probe for food in the mud. Plimpies eat water snails and aquatic plants.

Answer _____

10. Salamander – a fire-dwelling beast with a scaly skin that changes colour depending on the temperature. Salamanders are happiest when at the heart of a fire, warming their cold blood which has remarkable curative properties. They lay eggs in volcanoes or furnaces.

Answer _____

11. Unicorn – a creature with pure white fur, closely resembling a horse with a single horn protruding from the centre of its forehead. Unicorn foals are born a pale golden colour and their skin and fur lightens as they grow to adulthood. By the time they stop drinking milk from their mothers they are usually a creamy colour. Unicorn blood is silvery in colour and has magical properties.

Answer _____