

The Poison Dart Frog

By: National Geographic (Adapted by Have Fun Teaching)

Poison dart frogs wear some of the most brilliant and beautiful colors on Earth. Depending on their habitats, which are from the tropical forests of Costa Rica to Brazil, their coloring can be yellow, gold, copper, red, green, blue, or black. Their designs and colors scare off predators.

You may have seen monkeys carrying their children on their backs. Well, some of these frogs show some of these parenting habits, including carrying both eggs and tadpoles on their backs.



These frogs are some of the most toxic animals on Earth. The two-inch-long Golden Poison Dart Frog has enough venom to kill 10 grown men. Indigenous people of Colombia have used its powerful venom for centuries to tip their blowgun darts when hunting.

Scientists are not sure why these poison dart frogs are so poisonous, but it is possible they take in plant poisons which are carried by their prey, including ants, termites and beetles. Poison dart frogs raised in captivity and isolated from insects in their native habitat never develop venom.

The medical research community has been exploring ways to use poison dart frog venom in medicine. Scientists have already used their venom to create a painkiller medicine.

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Read the story. Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. The poison dart frog has designs and colors that help the frog to
 - A. Enter a beauty contest
 - B. Scare off predators
 - C. Easily hide from predators
 - D. Live longer
2. How are poison dart frogs similar to monkeys?
 - A. They both are colorful
 - B. They both are poisonous
 - C. They both carry their young on their backs
 - D. They both carry eggs and tadpoles
3. What is so amazing about the Golden Poison Dart Frog?
 - A. It has a bright golden color
 - B. It is only 2 inches long and has enough venom to kill 10 grown men
 - C. It is 10 inches long and has enough venom to kill 2 grown men
 - D. It can be Yellow, Gold, Copper, Red, Green, Blue, or Black
4. What is different about poison dart frogs that are raised in captivity?
 - A. They never develop venom
 - B. They never develop color
 - C. They are golden
 - D. They make great pets
5. How has the poison dart frog venom been used by people?
 - A. The venom has been used in soap
 - B. The venom has been used on the tips of darts for hunting
 - C. The venom has been used in medicine
 - D. Both B and C

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ANSWER KEY

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