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Research – Nature

The Ultimate Tardigrade Quiz – 50 Questions!

Work with a partner or small group. Print this page onto card, cut up the cards, then lay them face down on a table and mix them up. Take turns to draw one, read it out loud, and say whether the statement is TRUE, FALSE, or OPINION. If you get it right, keep your card. The one with the most cards at the end is the winner! Or work alone and sort the cards into the three groups, then check the answers.

1. Tardigrades are also known as moss piglets.	26. They are among the most interesting animals.
2. There are more than 1,100 species of Tardigrade.	27. They can live for up to two months.
3. Tardigrades have two arms and two legs.	28. Some people like to dress up as tardigrades.
4. Tardigrades make excellent pets.	29. Tardigrades are not invertebrates.
5. They are a type of micro-animal.	30. Tardigrades are harmless if you eat them.
6. They eat soil.	31. Tardigrades cannot swim.
7. They have been found almost everywhere.	32. You have probably eaten a few on a fresh salad.
8. Tardigrades are awesome!	33. My cousin kind of looks like a tardigrade.
9. They were discovered in 1846 by van der Groot.	34. Tardigrades do not live on humans or animals.
10. They can withstand extreme temperatures.	35. They can survive being eaten by humans.
11. They will be the last species left alive on earth.	36. They're called water bears due to how they move.
12. The word 'tardigrade' means 'water bear'.	37. Like insects, they have six legs.
13. They can live in the vacuum of outer space.	38. You're probably around ten metres from one now.
14. They can survive dehydration and starvation.	39. They are like real life (miniature) gummy bears.
15. Tardigrades are also known as water pigs.	40. No tardigrade fossils have been found.
16. Tardigrades are responsible for global warming.	41. Tardigrades live in water.
17. Tardigrades do not have eyes.	42. They are about 0.02mm long when fully grown.
18. They can withstand very high doses of radiation.	43. They are incredibly resilient.
19. A person who studies tardigrades is a Tardist.	44. They have two claws on the end of each leg.
20. They can suspend their metabolism for years.	45. Tardigrades always reproduce asexually.
21. They cannot be seen under a normal microscope.	46. Tardigrades are the best species on the planet.
22. Tardigrades have unpleasant features.	47. Some tardigrades are cannibals.
23. They live in damp places, like mosses and soil.	48. Tardigrades are mostly brown.
24. A tardigrade is not able to change its basic shape.	49. Scientists do not use tardigrades for research.
25. They have telescopic mouths which spiral out.	50. Tardigrades are impossibly cute.

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Answers:

1. True.
2. True.
3. False. They have four pairs of legs.
4. Opinion.
5. True.
6. False. They eat plant cells, algae, and other small invertebrates.
7. True.
8. Opinion.
9. False. They were first discovered by a German zoologist called Goeze in 1777.
10. True. They can withstand temperatures between -272°C (-458°F) up to 151°C (304°F).
11. Opinion
12. False. Tardigrade means 'slowly stepping', from the Latin: *tardus* ('slow') + *gradior* ('step, walk')
13. True.
14. True.
15. False. They are also known as water bears.
16. Opinion.
17. False. They have very simple single-celled eyes.
18. True.
19. False. They are known as Tardigradologists.
20. True. When their environment becomes untenable they enter a 'tun' state, where they can suspend their metabolism – even for ten years.
21. False. They can.
22. Opinion.
23. True.
24. False. They do not have a stable three-dimensional form, which means they are able to alter their basic shape.
25. True. Once the mouth is extended sharp teeth are revealed.
26. Opinion.
27. False. They can live for up to two and a half years under normal conditions.
28. True. Search for 'tardigrade costumes'.
29. False. They are invertebrates.
30. True.
31. False. They can, since they live in water.
32. True.
33. Opinion.
34. True.
35. False. They cannot. Our digestive system would kill them.
36. True.
37. False. They have eight legs.
38. True.
39. Opinion.
40. False. There are tardigrade fossils dating from 530 million years ago.
41. True.
42. False. They are usually 0.3-0.5mm long when fully grown.
43. True.
44. False. There are usually four to eight claws on the end of each leg.
45. False. Some are male, some female, and some are asexual.
46. Opinion.
47. True.
48. False. They are almost translucent.
49. False. Tardigrades are being used by scientists for research, including research into vaccines and space travel.
50. Opinion.

Sources and links to further reading:

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