

## **CRICKETS Reading Comprehension**

**Description:** The adult house cricket is about two centimeters in length. The body is usually light brown with black markings about the head and thorax. The female is told from the male by the presence of an ovipositor, a long extension attached to the end of the abdomen, used for depositing eggs in the soil. House crickets have conspicuous jumping legs and have two pairs of wings, of which only the back pair are used for flight.

**Habitat:** House crickets can be found in a variety of habitats including woodlands, suburbs, urban areas, buildings, ducts, siding, restaurants, and anywhere else there happens to be a food supply and warm air. Although many crickets die off in the colder months, those that manage to find their way indoors can stay alive year-round.

**Reproduction:** Crickets reach sexual maturity between eight and twelve weeks after birth. Males attract mates by rubbing their wings together to produce a noise sometimes referred to as "chirping". Technically, this process is called stridulation. Interestingly enough, the rate in which a cricket "chirps" is determined by the temperature outside. When it is warmer, crickets chirp faster. Scientists can actually tell the exact outdoor temperature by timing the rate of cricket "chirpings". After the male mates with the female, the female will lay between 50 and 100 eggs in the ground or another soft surface. The eggs hatch in about two weeks.

**Life Cycle:** Incomplete Metamorphosis: egg -> nymph -> adult

**Diet:** House crickets will eat just about anything including soft plant matter, insects, young crickets, and decomposing matter.

**1.) What determines how fast a cricket "chirps"?**

- a.) the number of females around
- b.) food supply
- c.) temperature
- d.) the number of predators around

**2.) Which of the following do you think is about the size of a cricket (2 centimeters)?**

- a.) A hot dog
- b.) A flea
- c.) A match
- d.) A dragonfly

**3.) How long does it take cricket eggs to hatch?**

- a.) 21 days
- b.) 4 days
- c.) 7 days
- d.) 14 days

**4.) In which of the following months would it be unlikely to see a cricket outdoors?**

- a.) January
- b.) May
- c.) July
- d.) September

**5.) Which of the following shows the cricket's correct life cycle?**

- a.) egg -> nymph -> adult
- b.) adult -> nymph -> egg
- c.) nymph -> adult -> egg
- d.) egg -> adult -> nymph

**6.) Where would you probably NOT find a cricket?**

- a.) restaurant
- b.) house
- c.) woodlands
- d.) ocean

**7.) What organ is used for depositing eggs into the soil?**

- a.) head
- b.) legs
- c.) thorax
- d.) ovipositor

**8.) Which of the following is NOT true?**

- a.) Some crickets survive during the cold months.
- b.) Crickets have two sets of wings.
- c.) Males and females have ovipositors.
- d.) Crickets can reproduce after 12 weeks.

**9.) Which of the following is probably NOT part of a cricket's typical diet?**

- a.) wood
- b.) other crickets
- c.) plant material
- d.) insects

**10.) What do male crickets rub together to make their "chirping" noise?**

- a.) spiracles
- b.) wings
- c.) legs
- d.) antennae