

## Why aren't babies afraid of snakes?

The emotion of fear is essential for humans to survive. So why is it that babies have no fear of snakes?

### Tasks

Do the preparation task first. Then watch the video and do the exercises. You can also read the transcript.

### Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

#### Vocabulary

1. .... a survival mechanism
2. .... balance
3. .... a threat
4. .... fearless
5. .... to threaten
6. .... rational
7. .... a rodent
8. .... a squid

#### Definition

- a. logical, based on facts and not on emotions
- b. a small animal with sharp front teeth (e.g. a mouse, rat or squirrel)
- c. a state where everything is good and in the right amount
- d. to put in danger
- e. something bad which could happen
- f. something you do automatically to protect yourself
- g. an animal that lives in the sea and has a long, soft body with two tentacles and eight arms
- h. not scared, not afraid

### Task 1

	<b>Answers</b>	
1. Fear causes humans to lose their sense of equilibrium.	True	False
2. Humans are genetically programmed to feel fear.	True	False
3. Other people teach us how to survive.	True	False
4. All fears have some sort of logical basis.	True	False
5. One of the people in the video is afraid of travelling by plane.	True	False
6. The presenter is confused by the pronunciation of the little boy.	True	False

**Task 2**

Write the correct word to complete the sentences.

1. The woman with the long hair is terrified of .....
2. The woman with the grey hair is scared of quick-moving .....
3. The teenage girl with the red hair is really scared of .....
4. The little girl with the curly hair is scared of .....
5. The little boy with the short, brown hair is scared of .....
6. The teenage boy with the short, brown hair is scared of .....

**Discussion**

Would you let your baby touch a snake?

## Transcript

**Presenter:** The emotion of fear is a vital survival mechanism, designed to protect our body's inner balance, a first line of defence against potential threats, even before they've struck. The strange thing is, we aren't born with it. For the first few months of our lives, we're quite literally fearless. Our ability to identify things that can threaten our survival is something we learn from those around us. That's why some of our fears are rational ...:

**Woman 1:** I'm terrified of sharks.

**Woman 2:** Very quick-moving rodents.

**Teenage girl:** I'm really, really scared of spiders.

**Presenter:** ... but others are not:

**Girl:** Monsters.

**Boy 1:** Vampires.

**Teenage boy:** Giant squids.

**Boy 2:** /dɔk/. Very, very big /dɔk/. *(It is not clear whether he is saying 'dark', 'duck' or 'dog'.)*

**Presenter:** You're scared of the dark or a duck?

**Boy 2:** A duck.

**Presenter:** A duck?!

**Boy 2:** *(laughs)*

## Answers

### Preparation task

1. f
2. c
3. e
4. h
5. d
6. a
7. b
8. g

### Task 1

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. False
5. False
6. True

### Task 2

1. sharks
2. rodents
3. spiders
4. monsters
5. vampires
6. giant squids