



Get ready to wiggle into the world of the mealworm! These little creatures are more than just an average bug. They are small, yellow-brown worms that are about one to two inches long. You might think they are slimy like other worms, but they're not! They have a hard outer shell, called an exoskeleton. And guess what? They're not even really worms, but the larval stage of the Darkling Beetle.



Speaking of the Darkling Beetle, let's learn about the life cycle of these tiny wrigglers. It all starts when a female beetle lays hundreds of tiny, white eggs. After just a few days, the eggs hatch into tiny mealworms, which spend their time eating and growing until they're ready to turn into pupae. After a couple of weeks, the pupae transform into adult Darkling Beetles, and the cycle starts all over again!

Now that we know how they grow, let's dive into where you might find these critters and what they munch on. Mealworms are found all over the world and they love to live in dark, damp places like under logs or in your pet's food dish. Their favorite foods are grains, vegetables, and other decaying matter. But don't worry, they're not pests. In fact, they help break down dead plants and animals in the environment.



These little wiggly wonders aren't just interesting for their life cycle and diet, they also have a special relationship with humans and other animals. For humans, they're often used as food for pets like birds, fish, and reptiles, and some scientists are even studying them as a source of food for people! For other animals, they are a tasty snack and a crucial part of the food chain. So, the next time you see a mealworm, remember that they're much more than just a little worm – they're an important part of our world!



Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

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Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 11) "I dislike dark, enclosed spaces."
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- 17) "My mom can lay hundreds of eggs at a time, that's a lot of brothers and sisters!"
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- 27) "Decaying matter might not seem delicious to you, but it's a gourmet meal to us."
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Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 29) Grains and vegetables, and other decomposing materials make up the diet of mealworms.
- 30) It would be really cool to keep mealworms as pets.
- 31) Mealworms live in dark, humid places worldwide, such as beneath logs.
- 32) Mealworms may look like caterpillars, but they are much better.
- 33) Mealworms are actually the larval stage of the Darkling Beetle.
- 34) It is amazing to think that mealworms can transform into a completely different creature.
- 35) Mealworms serve as a vital food source for pets like birds, fish, and reptiles.
- 36) Mealworms transform into pupae after growing and eating.
- 37) Darkling Beetles are much more interesting than their larval stage, the Mealworm.
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Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 39) Mealworms have a hard outer shell, called an exoskeleton.
- 40) After hatching, mealworms immediately turn into pupae.
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Determine which choice is the expanded form of the underlined contraction.

- 49) Mealworms don't eat during their pupa stage.
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Meal Worms

Name: _____

1. _____ 26. _____ 51. _____
2. _____ 27. _____ 52. _____
3. _____ 28. _____ 53. _____
4. _____ 29. _____ 54. _____
5. _____ 30. _____ 55. _____
6. _____ 31. _____ 56. _____
7. _____ 32. _____ 57. _____
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9. _____ 34. _____ 59. _____
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11. _____ 36. _____ 61. _____
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13. _____ 38. _____ 63. _____
14. _____ 39. _____ 64. _____
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16. _____ 41. _____
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- 51) Mealworms aren't insects, they're the larvae of darkling beetles.
 - A. cannot
 - B. are able
 - C. will not
 - D. are not
- 52) They're found in dark and damp places like under logs and rocks.
 - A. They are
 - B. They is
 - C. They have
 - D. They were
- 53) Mealworms can't really defend themselves.
 - A. are able
 - B. will not
 - C. cannot
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Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

- 54) It's shocking to realize that meal worms are not worms, but larvae of darkling beetles!
- 55) Sprinkle a small amount of water on the meal worms every day.
- 56) What do mealworms like to eat?
- 57) It's astonishing how meal worms can live up to two years!
- 58) Mealworms are the larvae of darkling beetles.
- 59) What interesting facts do you know about meal worms?
- 60) Mealworms release a foul-smelling odor to deter predators.
- 61) Where do meal worms live?
- 62) Birds and reptiles love to snack on mealworms.
- 63) Feed the meal worms small pieces of fruits and vegetables.
- 64) Meal worms can eat a variety of things including grains, vegetables, fruits, and even decaying animals!
- 65) Please handle meal worms gently.



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|-----|-----------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | <u> D </u> | 26. | <u> Not </u> | 51. | <u> D </u> |
| 2. | <u> B </u> | 27. | <u> Would </u> | 52. | <u> A </u> |
| 3. | <u> C </u> | 28. | <u> Would </u> | 53. | <u> C </u> |
| 4. | <u> B </u> | 29. | <u> fact </u> | 54. | <u> exclamatory </u> |
| 5. | <u> B </u> | 30. | <u> opinion </u> | 55. | <u> imperative </u> |
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