

Name: _____ Date: _____

Unusual Animals: Mata Mata



When you put your foot in a river or stream be careful. You see a log, but it could be a mata mata! The mata mata is a turtle from South America. It has special camouflage on its shell. In the water the Mata mata looks like a log.

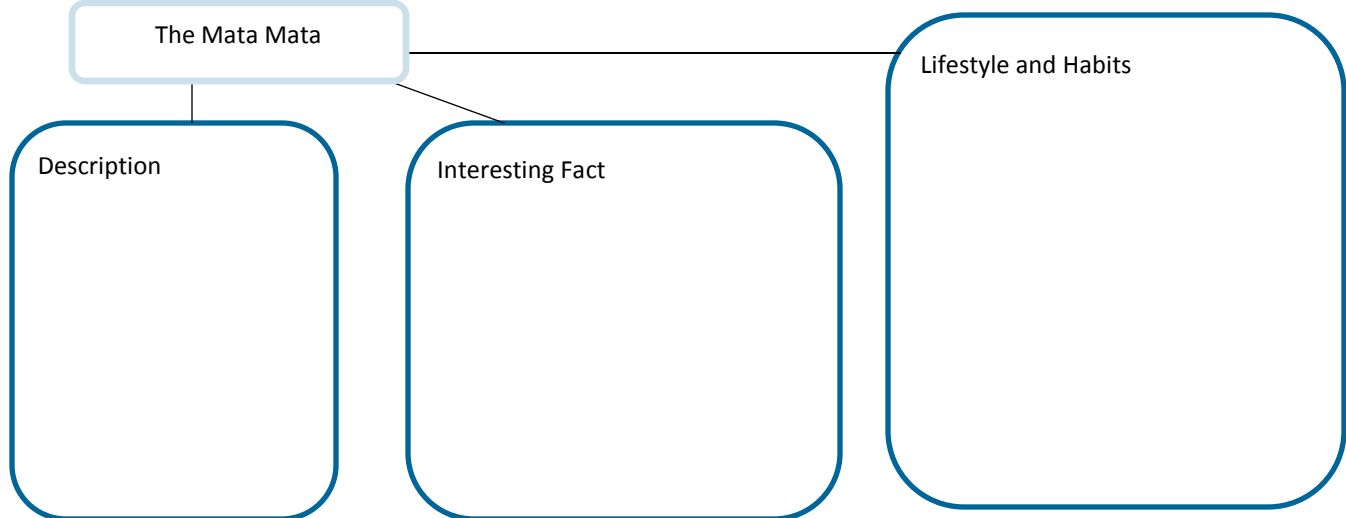
The mata mata lives in slow moving water, like streams, pools and swamps. Like other turtles, the mata mata can breathe and walk on land. But the mata mata prefers life in the water. You won't find the mata mata in a deep pool. It likes shallow water. The mata mata can stick its nose out of the water to breathe. The mata mata also looks for

food in the water. It eats fish, insects and other creatures that live in the water.

Underwater a mata mata looks like a log. This can help the mata mata hunt for food. It does not move very fast. The mata mata stays very still. It waits for fish to swim nearby. Then snap! Dinner is served. The mata mata's camouflage hides it from fish until it is too late!

A. Where does a mata mata live? _____

B. Read the story. Complete the chart.



C. Some people like to keep the mata mata as a pet. Would you want a pet mata mata? Why or why not? Tell your partner what you think.