

# Title: Put Yourself in MY Skin

**Ages:** K- adult

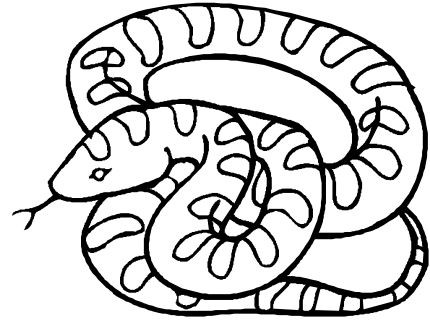
**Duration:** one hour

## Outcomes:

- Students will get an inside look at how a snake might feel while shedding it's skin
- Students will express how they are feeling
- Students will work cooperatively in pairs

## Materials:

- A shed snakeskin, or pictures of one
- Knee-high nylons (enough for each student)
- Goggles made with wax paper for the lenses
- White board
- Science journals (if you use them in your class)
- Goggle tracers (fig. a)



## Preparation:

- Have the goggle tracers set and the wax paper ready and yarn cut for tying

## Procedures:

- Start with asking the students what they know about snakes. If shedding of skin doesn't come up ask the students if they know what snakes do as they grow.
- As the snake grows, it sheds its skin. Not only is it a physical transformation, it is also emotional for the snake. A snake's disposition changes right before and after shedding, they may be more aggressive or defensive. One of the reasons for this may be the fact that the snakes vision is impaired before shedding due to the layer of skin over the eyes that it must shed.
- Let the students know that they are going to work in pairs and put themselves 'in the snake's skin' so to speak to try and see what it might feel like to have to shed your skin.
- Have the students make the goggles and each take a nylon knee high (or one knee high per group)
- One of the students will put the goggles on and their partner will put the knee high on either their leg or their forearm. The student will then have to rub the nylon off using only objects around them, but not using any other part of their body. Remember, their vision will be blurred due to the goggles. The partner who is not wearing the goggles is in charge of helping their partner to remain safe.
- Once the person has successfully removed the knee-high they have to describe to their partner how they felt during their 'shed'
- Now it is the other persons turn.
- When everyone has had a turn return to the whole class grouping and discuss what they all thought of it.

- Write down on paper or the white board some words that people would use to describe how they felt while doing this experiment. Did they find that smooth surfaces helped them shed or rough? Was it easy? Why? Difficult? Why?
- Ask the students if they can understand why snakes may want to be left alone while shedding. Also be sure to explain that this was much easier than it is for a snake. The underlying new skin is soft and vulnerable to damage while the outer layers prepare to slough away so if the shedding skin is removed too quickly it can hurt the snake.

**Assessment:**

- Walk around while the experiment is going on. Actively ask the students what they are thinking and feeling
- When you are writing down the observations at the end of the lesson, write the students initials next to their observations as you write them down so you can look back later

**Extensions:**

- A lot of people are afraid of snakes. Perhaps the students could make, "Did You Know?" posters about snakes and give interesting facts that make snakes less scary to the public. Many times people are scared of the unfamiliar.
- Have the students brainstorm ideas of how they can help the snakes in their area
- Have a reptile specialist come in with snakes to talk about them and how complex an animal they are.

