

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the story carefully. Then read each question and fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

## Alligators

*Frank Staub*

Pretend that a monster is walking into your yard. It is ten feet long, and its skin is dark and scaly. Its mouth is full of sharp teeth, and its strong jaws could break your bones. Creatures like this really do walk into people's yards. But they are not monsters. They are alligators.

Alligators spend most of their time floating in or lying next to water. They live in wetlands. Wetlands are land covered with water. Water may stay in a wetland all the time or just during part of the year. Rivers, lakes, and swamps are freshwater wetlands. A freshwater wetland has little or no salt in it.

Many wetlands are gone now. People have filled them in with dirt and rocks. They wanted to make dry land for their houses. Some alligators in those areas have nowhere else to go. So, every now and then, an alligator crawls into someone's yard. It's probably looking for food in what used to be its home. An alligator can run fast. It can stand on its toes and lift its body off the ground to run. Small dogs watch out! A small dog would make a tasty meal for an alligator.

*Now answer the questions about this part of the story.*