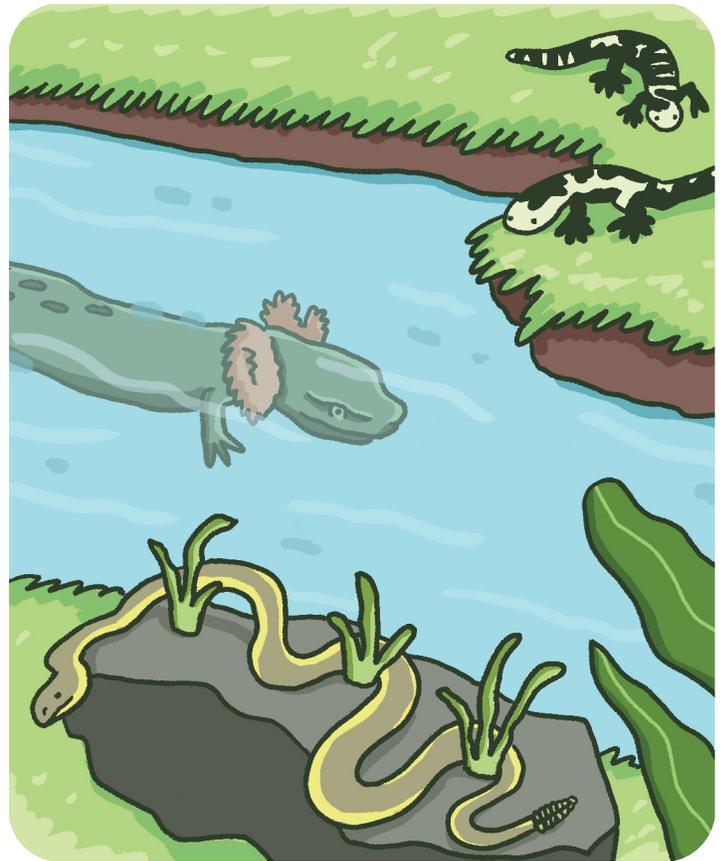
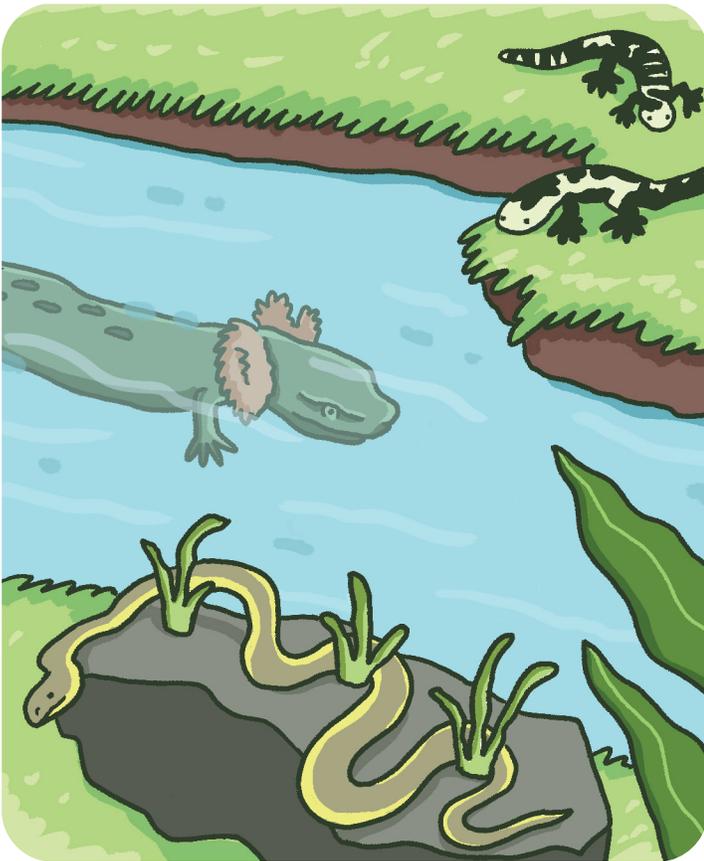


Spot the Difference

Use your observation skills to spot **5 differences** between the two drawings!



They may look like lizards, but salamanders are actually amphibians! Many salamanders spend time in the water and on land, like the **marbled salamander**. Marbled salamanders aren't found near Chicago, but they do live in the southern half of Illinois. They spend the first part of their lives living in water, so they use gills to breathe. As adults, they develop lungs and live on land near bodies of water. Adult marbled salamanders have a tail, four legs, and five toes on each foot. They live in moist habitats and spend most of their time underground. Their dark brown/black bodies and silvery white crossbands make them easy to identify if you're lucky enough to see one!

Some salamanders don't leave the water at all! **Mudpuppies** are one of three Illinois species of salamander that spend their entire life in the water. That means they keep their external frilly gills their entire lives! They also have a tail, four legs, and four toes on each foot. They're found throughout Illinois, where they live in lakes, rivers, and creeks. Their bodies are typically gray or rust brown with dark spots along their backs, helping them blend into the bottom of lakes and rivers. Although mudpuppies are native to Illinois, they're actually one of our state's threatened species.

Another animal that you might find near bodies of water is the **common gartersnake**. They're often found in forests, grasslands, edge habitats, and urban areas. Like other snakes you might know, common gartersnakes have two eyes for seeing, nostrils for breathing, a forked tongue that helps them smell, and a specialized jawbone that helps them "hear" by picking up vibrations. Common gartersnakes are some of the first snakes to emerge in the spring and some of the last to hibernate in the fall. Their bodies are mostly dark with light stripes that run from their heads to their tails. These non-venomous snakes can be found throughout the state of Illinois (even in the city of Chicago!).

Spot the Difference

Answer Key

