**My snake mate**

**Snakes can make good companions**

companions

[kəmˈpænjənz]

Ma Kexin, 16, from Beijing has always loved animals. She has two cats and a mouse. But then one day she had a funny idea – “what about adding a snake?!” So she did.

Ma has been keeping a black kingsnake since she got it from her classmate two years ago. Now, the snake has grown as long as her arm and as thick as her thumb (大拇指). Ma doesn’t find it scary(害怕的). Instead, she thinks it’s “cute and shy, maybe because it’s a ‘girl’”. “She often hides in a coconut shell and comes out when she feels hungry,” said Ma. She calls her snake “Shejiang”.

grown

[ɡrəʊn]

thumb

[θʌm]

Ma feeds Shejiang two baby mice she buys from a pet food store each week. To make the meat stay fresh, she keeps the mice in the fridge and takes them out two hours before feeding Shejiang to let the meat fully defrost (解冻).

defrost

[ˌdiːˈfrɒst]

Shejiang’s home is a big glass tank (缸). With a lid on, it’s a safe place for the snake to hide from the cats. Ma puts a water basin in for its drinking and slough. So far, Ma has collected about eight snake sloughs. “Each slough shows clearly the veins of snake scales,” said Ma. Plus, there is also soft and dry bedding at the bottom to make it feel safe and comfortable.

For Ma, the cold-blooded animal can be warm. Sometimes she writes homework till very late. The snake keeps her company as it quietly watches her from its hiding place.

She thinks the key to keeping a snake is to respect (尊重) it. “Although it’s your pet, you should not disturb it too much. If you play with it on your hand very often, it could feel bad and may refuse to eat,” she said.

respect

[rɪˈspekt]

refuse

[rɪˈfjuːz]

by XIONG JIAN, 21st Century Teens

a I like watching it swim around.

b she sleeps on my knees.

c it’s very small and soft and I can hold it in my hand.

d I can feed her carrots and I like her long ears.

e I can play with him in the park.

f it can sing. I want to teach it.

 to speak.

*Activity1: Read and match*

1.I like my parrot because

2.I like my rabbit because

3.I like my goldfish because

4.I like my white mouse because

5.I like my dog because

6.I like my cat because

*Activity2:Make up a puzzle (编谜语) about one kind of pet.*

*List only key words.(列要点)*

Looks:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Food:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Character(性格):\_lazy, noisy（闹腾的）, quiet, hard -working, energetic（充满活力的）, active（活泼的）......

*Activity3:Pet safety tips*

· Most snakes that are kept as pets, such as corn snakes and pythons (蟒蛇), are non-venomous (无毒的), so you’ll have to .

· If you are bitten, as with any pet bite you should that you clean the wound(伤口) with antiseptic (消毒剂) and cover it a plaster (创可贴) or bandage to avoid infection (感染).

· If your snake bites you and refuses to let go, don’t pull it off. Instead, gently apply pressure (施加压力) the jaw until it lets go.

·After dealing with your snake you should always .

*Activity4：Writing My mate*

you should include:

What’s your favorite pet? What’s its name? What does it look like? Why do you like it?(hobbies/characters)

 How do/will you keep it?

 What do you think of keeping pets? How do you treat it?

My mate

Now, more and more people are in love with keeping pets. I will introduce my favourite pet to you.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_