

Name: _____ Teacher: _____ School: _____

Grade 8: Lesson 11 Understanding Parasites and Hosts

Text for lesson:

Note: small portions of the source text have been omitted from this lesson in preparing it to air on public television.

Top 10 Real-Life Body Snatchers

By Megan Gambino, Smithsonian.com October 24, 2011

Parasites and zombies are not science fiction; they infest rats, crickets, ants, moths and other creatures, sucking the life out of them.

To ensure their own survival, parasites alter—that means change—the appearance and behavior of their hosts in the creepiest ways. For instance, rats carrying the parasitic protozoan *Toxoplasma gondii*, which reproduces inside the gut of a cat, no longer fear the smell of cat urine. In fact, they are attracted to the scent, according to a recent study. This way, infected rats walk right into the grips of a feline.

Independent Practice questions:

1. Why did the author title a text about parasites “Top 10 Real-Life Body Snatchers”?

Sourced from LearnZillion