

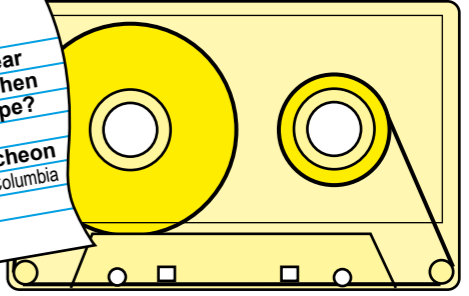
Dear Readers,
Today, I thought you might enjoy expeditious explanations to a quantity of quick queries.
Jax Place
San Rafael, California

Beakman or Jax,
P.O. Box 30177
Kansas City, MO 64112
Send your question & address.

Dear Jax,
I hate reading. Why do I have to do it? It is no fun. It is boring. Why do I have to do it!
Susanne Mullins
Morganton, North Carolina

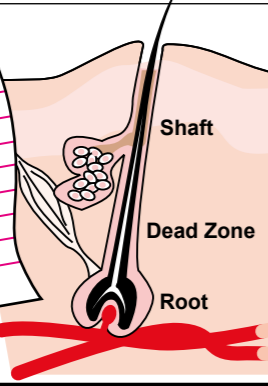
Dear Susanne,
Please lighten up and get a grip. Hate is such a lot of work. Save your energy for something that matters. Look, most stuff you want to know about is written down. So you need to read to get it. Even the TV listings are written. If you couldn't read, you wouldn't get to see your name in the newspaper!

Dear Jax,
Why don't we hear our real voice when we hear it on tape?
Fraser McCutcheon
Cloverdale, British Columbia



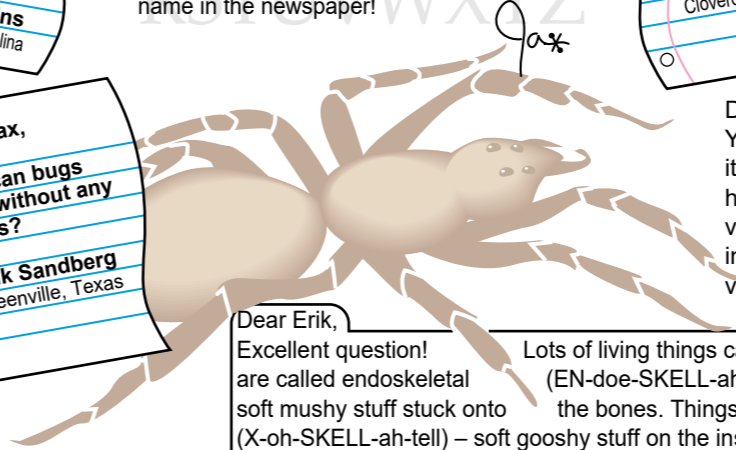
Dear Fraser,
You *do* hear your real voice on tape – or at least a copy of it. It sounds different to you just because you are used to hearing your voice from the inside. You hear your own voice through vibrations in your skull along with vibrations in the air. A microphone – and other people – hear your voice only through vibrations in the air.

Dear Jax,
Why doesn't it hurt when we cut hair or fingernails?
Monica Broncucia
Denver, Colorado



Dear Monica,
No one likes to hear this, but the reason it doesn't hurt is that the ends of your hairs and fingernails are dead – *NOT* living tissue. Hair is alive at the root. As hair grows up and out, it dies in the dead zone. Above that zone, hair is not alive. A similar process happens with your fingernails. No matter what fancy shampoo or rinse you use, hair is dead – period.

Dear Jax,
How can bugs walk without any bones?
Erik Sandberg
Greenville, Texas



Dear Erik,
Excellent question!
Lots of living things can walk without having bones. Things *with* bones are called endoskeletal (EN-doe-SKELL-ah-tell) – hard stuff (bones) on the inside with lots of soft mushy stuff stuck onto the bones. Things that walk *without* bones are called exoskeletal (X-oh-SKELL-ah-tell) – soft gooshy stuff on the inside with a hard shell on the outside. Insects spiders, and (a dining favorite) lobsters use hard shells on the outside to hold up their bodies. Look closely the next time you squish a bug.