

Lesson Plan

Turtle Types

Book: *Life Cycle of a Turtle*

Series: Life Cycles

Level: Pioneer

Objective

To help students understand the similarities and differences among three different species of sea turtles.

Supplies

- *Life Cycle of a Turtle* book
- Access to the National Geographic Kids article “Green Sea Turtle”:
<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/facts/green-sea-turtle>
- Access to the National Geographic Kids article “Leatherback Sea Turtle”:
<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/facts/leatherback-sea-turtle>
- Access to the National Geographic Kids article “Loggerhead Sea Turtle”:
<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/facts/loggerhead-sea-turtle>
- Computer access for students
- Sea Turtle Exploration worksheet (attached)
- Whiteboard
- Pencils

Before the Activity

Read the *Life Cycle of a Turtle* book out loud to students. Divide the students into groups of three, assigning each group one of the following species: green sea turtles, leatherback sea turtles, or loggerhead sea turtles. Likely, multiple groups will be assigned to each species. Print a copy of the Sea Turtle Exploration worksheet for each group.

Activity

There are seven species, or kinds, of sea turtles. Students will learn about three of them. Set up each group of students at a separate computer, pulling up the National Geographic Kids article for the group’s assigned species. Students should read this article and fill out the worksheet to learn more about this type of turtle.

While students are working in their groups, draw the following table on the whiteboard:

	Green Sea Turtles	Leatherback Sea Turtles	Loggerhead Sea Turtles
How big are the sea turtles?			
Where do the sea turtles live?			
What do the sea turtles eat?			
What do the sea turtles look like?			
Where do females lay eggs?			
What dangers do the sea turtles face?			

Toward the end of class, invite students to share what they learned about their particular species of sea turtle. Write students' answers on the board in the appropriate section of the table, until the full chart is filled out. Invite students to comment on any similarities or differences they see among the three species of sea turtles.

Evaluation

Use the following filled-in chart to evaluate students' responses:

	Green Sea Turtles	Leatherback Sea Turtles	Loggerhead Sea Turtles
How big are the sea turtles?	Up to 5 feet	Up to 7 feet	36 inches (3 feet)
Where do the sea turtles live?	Along the coastline of more than 80 countries, but they nest mostly in Costa Rica or Australia	In all the oceans, except in the coldest areas	In all the oceans, except in the coldest areas
What do the sea turtles eat?	They're herbivores; they eat plants such as seaweed and seagrass	They're carnivores, so they eat meat; their main food is jellyfish	They're carnivores; they eat conches, horseshoe crabs, jellyfish, fish, seaweed, and algae
What do the sea turtles look like?	Fat is green; shell is a shade of brown or olive	Shell is leathery and black, often speckled with white or yellow spots	Beautifully colored; large head looks like a big log

Where do females lay eggs?	On the beach in the same nesting spot where they were born	On a sandy beach in a hole that they dig	On the beach in the same nesting spot where they were born
What dangers do the sea turtles face?	Injuries from boat propellers; getting caught in fishing nets; pollution; poaching; being hunted by birds, crabs, and racoons	Getting caught in fishing nets; having their nesting habitats destroyed; having their eggs collected by people for food; eating floating plastic trash; being hunted by gulls and other birds or by large fish	Babies are hunted by raccoons, crabs, birds, and other predators

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational text, grade 2 (RI 2.1), and the National Science Education Standards' Content Standard C, grades K–4.

Sea Turtle Exploration

Circle the name of your group's species:

Green Sea Turtle / Leatherback Sea Turtle / Loggerhead Sea Turtle

1. How big are the sea turtles?
2. Where do the sea turtles live?
3. What do the sea turtles eat?
4. What do the sea turtles look like?
5. Where do the female sea turtles lay eggs?
6. What dangers do the sea turtles face?