

The Life Cycle of a Sea Turtle

Lesson Duration: 40 minutes

Teacher Information

This lesson will introduce students to the life cycle of a sea turtle, their body parts, foods they eat, habitats that they live in, and how they interact with their environment. Main concepts of this lesson include: life cycles, structure & function of body parts, and ecosystem interactions & dynamics.

National Education Standards

- 3-LS1: Develop models to describe that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles, but all have in common birth, growth, reproduction, and death. Students will learn that sea turtles begin as eggs on the beach, grow into adults, and return to the beach to lay eggs if they are females.
- 4-LS1: Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction. Students will learn the body parts of the sea turtle and the function these body parts serve.

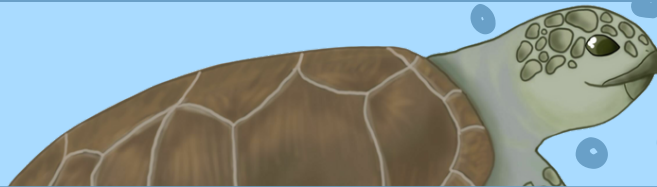
The Life Cycle of a Sea Turtle

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to understand and describe the life cycle of sea turtles, including the different stages they go through and the challenges they face during each stage.

Materials

- Pictures or illustrations of sea turtles in different life stages
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Markers/crayons/colored pencils
- Sea Turtle Life Cycle Worksheet (provided)



Warm-up (5 minutes)

- Begin the lesson by displaying pictures or illustrations of sea turtles in different life stages.
- Ask students if they know what these animals are and if they have any prior knowledge about sea turtles.
- Facilitate a brief discussion about sea turtles, encouraging students to share what they already know and any questions they have.

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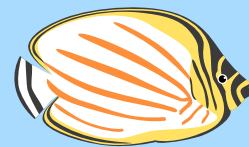
Life Cycle of Sea Turtles

Duration: 30 minutes

- Introduce the concept of a life cycle, explaining that it is the sequence of changes an organism goes through from birth to adulthood.
- Draw a chart on the board or chart paper with four sections: "Egg," "Hatchling," "Juvenile," and "Adult."
- Explain the different stages of a sea turtle's life cycle using the following key points:
 - Stage 1: Egg - Sea turtles lay their eggs on sandy beaches. The mother sea turtle digs a hole in the sand and lays her eggs. She then covers them up and returns to the ocean.
 - Stage 2: Hatchling - After about 45-70 days depending on the species of sea turtle, the eggs hatch, and baby sea turtles emerge from the nest. They make their way to the ocean, guided by the moonlight and natural instincts.
 - Stage 3: Juvenile - The young sea turtles spend several years in the ocean, feeding and growing. They face many challenges, such as predators and finding food.
 - Stage 4: Adult - When they reach maturity, sea turtles return to the same beach where they were born to lay their eggs. This begins the cycle again.
- Use the pictures or illustrations to reinforce each stage and encourage student participation by asking questions and seeking their input.

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- (Independent Practice) Distribute the Sea Turtle Life Cycle Worksheet to each student. Instruct the students to label the four stages of the sea turtle life cycle (egg, hatchling, juvenile, adult) on their worksheets. Encourage the students to use colored pencils or crayons to draw and color each stage of the life cycle. Walk around the classroom, providing assistance and answering any questions that students may have. After completing the diagrams, ask volunteers to share their drawings and explain the different stages of the sea turtle life cycle.



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Conclusion (5 minutes)

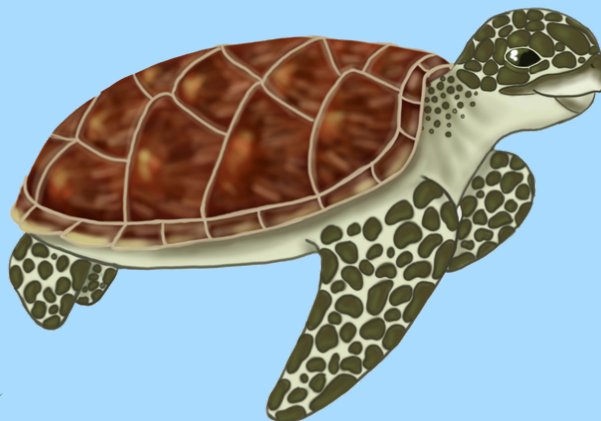
- Recap the main points of the lesson, emphasizing the four stages of the sea turtle life cycle: egg, hatchling, juvenile, and adult.
- Ask students to reflect on what they have learned and share any new insights or questions they may have.
- Conclude by highlighting the importance of conservation efforts to protect sea turtles and their habitats.

Assessment

- Observe student participation and engagement during discussions and activities.
- Review the completed worksheets to assess students' understanding of the sea turtle life cycle

Extensions

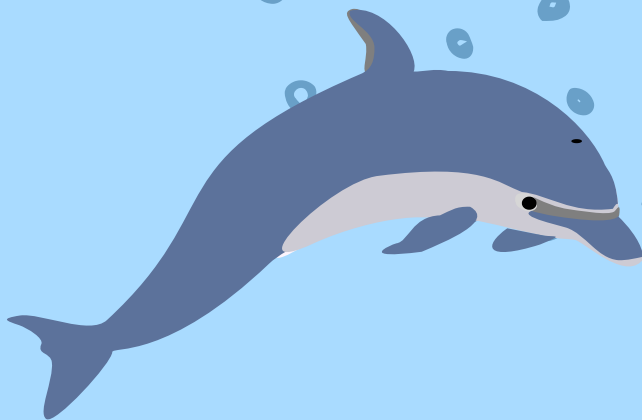
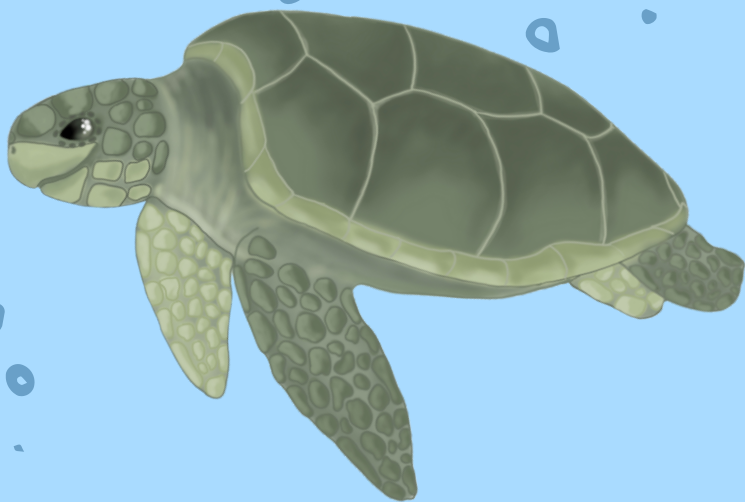
- Have students compare the life cycle of a sea turtle to other animals.
- Invite a local marine biologist or sea turtle conservationist to speak to the class in person or virtually.
- Organize a field trip to a local aquarium or sea turtle rescue center.



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Resources

- www.seeturtles.org/sea-turtle-life-cycle
- www.oliveridleyproject.org/sea-turtles-of-the-world/life-cycle-of-turtles



These materials are provided by SEE Turtles. SEE Turtles helps save sea turtles through conservation tours, supporting important nesting beaches, working to end demand for turtleshell, helping clean up plastic waste from turtle habitats, educating people about how to help these animals, and promoting inclusivity in the turtle community. For lesson plans, fundraising ideas, online presentations, and field trips, please visit www.seeturtles.org/schools. For more information, please contact Brad Nahill, SEE Turtles Director, at brad@seeturtles.org or 5800-215-0378.



Name: _____

Date: _____

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Directions: Label the four stages of the sea turtle life cycle. Draw and color each stage of the life cycle inside the circles.

