

Turtle Lesson

Title: Protect Turtles Pamphlet
Subject: Science
Grades: 5-7

Character Concept

Fairness means being considerate of the needs of others and taking only your fair share. When making decisions that influence wildlife, be sure that the animals will have their basic needs met in order to thrive.

Objective

Students will understand that actions of humans can affect the environment and the animals who live there. Students will recognize ways that they can help to protect turtles.

Curriculum Connection

Students will understand the concept of extinction and that humans can have an effect on whether an animal becomes extinct. Humans can cause an ecosystem to become unbalanced due to fishing, construction, road development, and other use of resources. They will identify ways that humans have affected turtles and propose solutions to reduce the impact. Students will develop educational pamphlets to be showcased in the community.

National Standards Addressed

NS.5-8.3

* POPULATIONS AND ECOSYSTEMS-

The number of organisms an ecosystem can support depends on the resources available and abiotic factors, such as quantity of light and water, range of temperatures, and soil composition. Given adequate biotic and abiotic resources and no disease or predators, populations (including humans) increase at rapid rates. Lack of resources and other factors, such as predation and climate, limit the growth of populations in specific niches in the ecosystem.

*DIVERSITY AND ADAPTATIONS OF ORGANISMS-

Extinction of a species occurs when the environment changes and the adaptive characteristics of a species are insufficient to allow its survival. Fossils indicate that many organisms that lived long ago are extinct. Extinction of species is common; most of the species that have lived on the earth no longer exist.

Materials Needed

- [KIND News \(May 2007 Senior Edition\) PDF](#)
- White drawing paper or construction paper
- Colored pencils, crayons, markers
- Web access or print outs of the following web resources:
- http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/a_closer_look_at_wildlife/turtles_and_tortoises/thirteen_things_to_do_for_turtles.html
- http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/a_closer_look_at_wildlife/turtles_and_tortoises/celebrate_world_turtle_day.html
- http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/issues_facing_wildlife/wildlife_crossings_wild_animals_and_roads/turtle_cross_the_road.html
- http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/issues_facing_wildlife/turtle_excluder_device_ted.html
http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/urban_wildlife_our_wild_neighbors/if_you_see_a_turtle_in_the_road.html
- http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/a_closer_look_at_wildlife/turtles_and_tortoises/
- example pamphlet for student reference
- stickers or pictures of turtles (optional)

Opening

1. Teacher will pass out copies of May 2007 Senior Edition KIND News or project the paper on a SmartBoard.
2. The teacher will ask students if they know what extinction is. Review that extinction does happen naturally in some cases, but in other cases extinction happens because of things humans do to the ecosystem.
3. Tell the students they are about to read a story about turtles and there may be some information about problems turtles are facing that could cause them to become extinct. As they read they should underline any specific problems they see. (If reading on a SmartBoard screen use the provided board pens to underline problems the students point out.)

Lesson Body

1. Ask the class to read the story titled "Turtle World!"
2. Draw a T-chart on the board.
3. Ask student to work with the teacher to create a list on the board of the problems they found in the story. These should be listed on the left side of the T-chart under the title "Problems Facing Turtles". (Problems may include):
 - harmful fishing techniques
 - pollution
 - hunting of turtles and their eggs
 - coastal development
 - taking wild turtles as pets
 - cars hitting turtles crossing the road

This list should remain up for the remainder of the lesson.

4. Tell the students that they are going to try and help turtles by creating informational pamphlets about how people can protect turtles from extinction.
5. Ask the students to help find different solutions to the problems faced by turtles. Pass out copies of "Twelve Things to Do for Turtles and Tortoises" located at http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/a_closer_look_at_wildlife/turtles_and_tortoises/thirteen_things_to_do_for_turtles.html and "Celebrate World Turtle Day" located at http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/a_closer_look_at_wildlife/turtles_and_tortoises/celebrate_world_turtle_day.html.

Additional sites students can use for research are:

- http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/issues_facing_wildlife/wildlife_crossings_wild_animals_and_roads/turtle_cross_the_road.html
 - http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/issues_facing_wildlife/turtle_excluder_device_ted.html
 - http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/a_closer_look_at_wildlife/turtles_and_tortoises/
6. Ask students to read these and underline potential solutions.
 7. With students, create a list of solutions to protect turtles. These should be listed on the right side of the T-chart under the title "Ways to Help Protect Turtles". Solutions should include (but are not limited to):
 - If one sees a turtle crossing the road move it in the direction it was headed (off of the road)
 - Protect turtle habitats limiting development (especially in coastal areas)
 - Pick up trash and do not litter because turtles suffer suffocation, strangulation, or blocked digestive tracts if they ingest trash thinking it is food.
 - Do not take turtles from the wild or have turtles as pets
 - Support legislation that stops the exporting of turtles for food in foreign countries

- Support Turtle Excluder Devices
- Report crimes that affect turtles

This list should remain up for the rest of the lesson.

8. Review the making of a pamphlet with students. (You can choose a bi-fold or tri-fold pamphlet, or small booklet-type of brochure.) Students should be reminded that information in a pamphlet should be given a heading and details should be bulleted or numbered. Show an example of another pamphlet as a reference.
9. Write on the board (or create a pamphlet checklist to pass out- optional) that students' pamphlets should contain:
 - Title or topic page as the first page
 - Description of turtles and the basic needs and/or habitats of turtles
 - Problem(s) turtles are facing
 - Proposed solution to the problems
 - How to learn more about turtles (web sites or recommended books)
 - Pictures or drawings to add interest
10. Pass out paper to be used by students in pamphlet creation. (Work may be done at home or during the lesson.)

Closure

1. Prepare a gallery walk in which students place their pamphlet on their desk and students walk around the room to view the pamphlets of others. (While students are walking around the room erase the "solutions" side of the T-chart.)
2. With the class, review the definition of extinction and the problems faced by turtles.
3. Ask students to place the "solutions" back on the T-chart using the information they learned during the gallery walk.
4. Collect the pamphlets and place them on display in your library, community center, school cafeteria or other public location.

Extension Ideas

- Have a World Turtle Day celebration on May 23. See www.tortoise.com for more information.
- Complete the Mission: Humane project, "Shoot to Save Wildlife". For information visit http://www.kindnews.org/Mission_Humane/shoot_to_save_wildlife.asp.