Wisconsin Water Library
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Lesson Plan
Come Out of Your Shell: All About Turtles

This lesson plan works very well with children preschool through second grade. The lesson lasts between 45 minutes to an hour, based on the number of books read. To orient the children to what it means to be a scientist, think scientifically and "do science," use the **"A Scientist Is. . ." and "Scientific Method"** handouts available at the end of this lesson plan.

SING

Begin with your favorite welcome song.

SCIENCE CHAT

Begin a theme on turtles at circle time by freestyle asking the children what they know about turtles. **Use the identifying images of turtles at the end of this lesson plan** throughout the chats and activities to show turtle variety.

SOME TURTLE FACTS FOR CHILDREN
TURTLES ARE. . .

One of the oldest living animals on earth, they existed over 200 million years ago

Some turtles can live for a very long time, to 100 years old and older

Many different sizes

Live in many different settings from land and water, to forests and grasslands

Many land turtles are called tortoises.

They are reptiles

Their shell protects them from predators

There are over 250 species

Some are endangered and need protecting

Some turtles can be kept as pets, and they need to be taken care of properly

They can be carnivores, herbivores, and omnivores depending on what kind of turtle

READ

Suggestions from the Wisconsin Water Librarians, but feel free to swap out with your own OR visit our

subject specific reading list: Turtles.

Start with Poem: "*Into the Mud*"

Sun slants low, chill seeps into black water.

No more days of bugs and basking.

Last breath, last sight of light and down I go, into the mud.

Every year, here, I sink and settle, shuttered like a shed.

Inside my eyes close, my heart slows to a winter rhythm.

Goodbye, goodbye!

Remember the warmth.

Remember the quickness.

Remember me.

Remember.

"Into the Mud" excerpted from *Song of the Water Boatman & Other Pond Poems (2005)* by Joyce Sidman illustrated by Beckie Prange

READ: *Big Turtle (2011)* by David McLimans

READ: *Turtle Splash! Countdown at the Pond (2001)* by Cathryn Falwell

READ: *The Voyage of Turtle Rex (2011)* by Kurt Cyrus

SING

Use any song you like adapted to the theme of turtles. Here are a few suggestions

SING: Counting Turtles Song

1 baby turtle alone and new,
Finds a friend, and then there are 2.
2 baby turtles crawl down to the sea.
They find another, and then there are 3.
3 baby turtles crawl along the shore.
They find another, and then there are 4.
4 baby turtles go for a dive.
Up swims another and now there are 5

FINGER PLAY: Little Turtle

There was a little turtle

That lived in a box. (put hands together to make a box)

He swam in a puddle, (make swimming movements)

And he climbed on the rocks.

He snapped at a mosquito, (snap your fingers)

He snapped at a flea, (snap your fingers)

He snapped at a minnow, (snap your fingers)

And he snapped at me. (snap your fingers)

He caught the mosquito, (clap)

He caught the flea, (clap)

He caught the minnow, (clap)

But he didn't catch me!! (make a proud face

SING: Turtles Everywhere

Tune: "On Top of Old Smokey"

Some turtles swim over the ocean.

Some turtles swim over the sea.

Some turtles grow very big

As big as you and me.

Turtles, turtles, swimming here and there.

Turtles, turtles, turtles everywhere.

CRAFT IDEA: PAPER PLATE TURTLE

Supplies needed:

Paper plates
Construction paper
Scissors
Googly eyes
Markers/crayons
Cups to hold markers/eyes
Glue
Yarn

Create a turtle using paper plates, construction paper, torn pieces of crepe paper, markers, and glue. It's a good idea to pre-cut the construction paper (turtle heads and limbs) and tear the crepe paper ahead of time, so the children just have to assemble.

A SCIENTIST IS SOMEONE WHO...

Observes and wonders

Asks questions

Listens to ideas of others

Conducts experiments

Shares his/her ideas and discoveries

Explores the world around him/her

Uses tools to solve problems

A SCIENTISTS SAYS...

I agree with you because...

I disagree with you because...

Why do you think that?

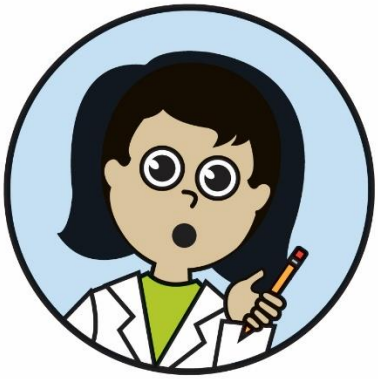
So, what you're saying is...

Can you tell me more?

Can you give me an example?

How could we test that?

That reminds me of...



DOES IT SINK OR FLOAT?

SCIENTIFIC METHOD

IMAGES:

Common Snapping Turtle

Eastern Box Turtle

Green Sea Turtle

Leatherback

Northern Map Turtle

Ornate Box Turtle