

# Historic and Current Uses of Turtles by Humans

Grade 5 – Social Studies



## Lesson Details

<b>Grade Level:</b>	5	<b>Curriculum Links:</b>	Social Studies	<b>Time Needed:</b>	2 hours
<b>Learning Goal</b>	To learn about the historic and current uses of turtles by humans using investigative and inquiry-based work. To gain an understanding of how humans interact with animals, and the negative impact that such uses may have.				
<b>Success Criteria</b>	By the end of this lesson, students will have researched the current and historic uses of turtles, filling out the attached worksheet. Students will also research a turtle species of their choosing.				
<b>Specific Expectations</b>	<p><i>Social Studies – People and Environments: The Role of Government and Responsible Citizenship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather and organize a variety of information and data that present various perspectives about Canadian social and/or environmental issues, including the perspectives of Indigenous peoples and of the level (or levels) of government responsible for addressing the issues;</li> <li>Create a plan of action to address an environmental issue of local, provincial/territorial, and/or national significance specifying the actions to be taken by the appropriate level (or levels) of government as well as by citizens, including themselves.</li> </ul>				
<b>Materials Needed</b>	Worksheet (attached), Extra Images (attached), Pencil, Computer, Internet Access, Library Database.				

## Lesson Description

<b>Overview</b>	Students will research the current and previous uses of turtles around the world. After, they will form an opinion on the human influence on turtle populations.
<b>Activity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin by asking students “where does leather come from?”.</li> <li>Discuss the relationship between humans and animals throughout history with regards to human products made from animal parts (see <i>Extra Images</i>).</li> <li>Create a list together of animal products, in categories such as food, clothing, and cultural items.</li> <li>Explain how this relationship has been important for human survival for years.</li> <li>Furthering the discussion ask the students the following questions:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is our world different today, with regards to how we use animal products? Do we use them less? More?</li> <li>Do we still depend on animals for food and clothing the same way we used to?</li> <li>Does our dependence on animals impact them negatively or positively?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Next, have students research the uses of turtles (food, clothing, pets, medicine, etc.) from around the world, and the associated impacts. This can be done either independently or in small groups. Have students fill out the attached worksheet to guide them in their research.</li> <li>After researching, students should form an opinion on the negative/positive impacts on turtles from humans.</li> <li>Finally, have the students share their research on the uses of turtles and the associated impacts with each other. Discuss whether there are any similar</li> </ol>

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	<p>motivating factors behind various uses as well as what could be done to help mitigate the impact of various uses on turtle populations (including stopping certain practices all together).</p>
<b>Background Information</b>	<p>One human activity threatening turtle populations is the global trade of turtle parts for food, fashion, and cultural purposes (see attached document for images of specific uses). For a specific turtle example, the Spotted Turtle is illegally captured and sold as pets on the black market. Socio-economic pressures are incentivizing the trade of turtle parts around the world, despite data that indicates their dwindling numbers and endangered populations. As a result, populations of many turtle species are in decline and the health of water in our globally connected ecosystems is at risk.</p>
<b>Blacklist Masters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet (attached)</li> <li>• Extra Images (attached)</li> <li>• Video Link(s): <a href="#">Threats to Ontario Turtles</a></li> <li>• For more information, please visit <a href="https://www.turtleguardians.com/why-saving-turtles-is-important/">https://www.turtleguardians.com/why-saving-turtles-is-important/</a></li> </ul>
<b>Place-Based Learning</b>	<p>Students will better understand the impact that humans can have on vulnerable species and apply this knowledge to their everyday impacts on wildlife.</p>
<b>Inquiry-Based Learning</b>	<p>Using <b>Structured Inquiry</b>, the students will work independently to conduct research.</p> <p>Ask the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we still depend on animals for food in the same way that we used to?</li> <li>• Do we use animals in any way today that they were not used for in the past?</li> <li>• Does our use/dependence on animals have any negative impacts on the animal populations we use?</li> <li>• Does our use/dependence on animals have any negative impacts on the natural environment as a whole?</li> </ul>
<b>Turtle Stories</b>	<p>What are you going to do to change how we use animals, not just turtles, in our everyday lives? Wildlife is often impacted greatly by pollution, so keeping nature clean from garbage is one way to contribute. Try re-creating an item using recyclables that was previously made with a turtle (E.g. make a fan out of newspaper destined for the recycling bin, or a dress for a doll out of old clothing). Students are encouraged to share their experiences, pictures, and research on the Turtle Stories website, found here: <a href="https://www.turtlestories.ca/">https://www.turtlestories.ca/</a></p>
<b>Turtle Guardian Program Links</b>	<p>In <b>Level 1</b> (Ontario Turtle Identification) of the <b>Turtle Guardian Program</b>, students will learn how to identify all 8 species of Ontario's turtles and more information about the threats that turtles face. For more information, please visit <a href="https://www.turtleguardians.com/what-is-a-turtle-guardian/">https://www.turtleguardians.com/what-is-a-turtle-guardian/</a></p>

# My Notes



## Historic and Current Uses of Turtles – Examples



Picture Credit: Travel 4 Wildlife

Combs made from turtle shells



Picture Credit: Marine Turtle Newsletter

Wall decoration made from  
a turtle's head



Picture Credit: World Wildlife Foundation

Leather boots, shell guitar, necklace,  
and a decorative turtle



Picture Credit: Live Auctioneers

Fan made from a turtle shell



# Historic and Current Uses of Turtles

Name of Turtle Affected (Species):

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Geographical Region of Where the Turtles Are Being Used (Historic or Current):

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Draw a Picture of the Turtle Product:

What is the product used for? Who uses it?

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What is the importance of this product to the community harvesting the turtles?

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What impacts does the use/sale of this product have on the population of the turtle?

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How can we help to save the turtles, to make sure there are no more impacts to their populations?

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