

# Snapping Turtle Hunt Case Study

Grade 5 – Social Studies



## Lesson Details

<b>Grade Level:</b>	5	<b>Curriculum Links:</b>	Social Studies, Languages	<b>Time Needed:</b>	2 hours
<b>Learning Goal</b>	To practice researching skills and learn about a controversial topic involving many parties. Then, to make their own opinions based on research.				
<b>Success Criteria</b>	By the end of this lesson, students will have researched the Snapping Turtle hunt in Ontario, and will be able to summarize the information, as well as make their own opinions on the topic.				
<b>Specific Expectations</b>	<p><i>Social Studies – The Role of Government and Responsible Citizenship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the effectiveness of actions taken by one or more levels of government, including indigenous governments, to address an issue of national, provincial/territorial, and/or local significance;</li> <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> </ul> <p><i>Languages – Developing and Organizing Content</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research: gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a range of print and electronic resources.</li> </ul>				
<b>Materials Needed</b>	Worksheet (attached), Pencil, Computer, Internet Access.				

## Lesson Description

<b>Overview</b>	Students will collect data information about the ban of Snapping Turtle hunting in Ontario and answer questions about the topic.
<b>Activity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin by introducing the ban of Snapping Turtle hunting in Ontario.</li> <li>Hand out the worksheet to the students and provide them with computer access.</li> <li>Students will then research the ban on the hunt of Snapping Turtles in Ontario that occurred in 2017. Students will research this topic from multiple perspectives. Students will also analyze the topic and make an informed opinion by answering questions.</li> </ol>
<b>Background Information</b>	<p>If you remove turtles, especially snapping turtles from your lake, you can expect to eventually succumb to some unpleasant illnesses or issues. This is because turtles, but especially snapping turtles, are the creatures in water that can be considered the best at cleaning the water: They remove dead and decaying bodies of fishes, frogs, and other creatures from the lake.</p> <p>Snapping turtles are a protected species. Harming a snapping turtle has carried large fine of up to \$25,000. Harming a turtle includes moving a turtle from your lake. Turtles live in territories that they have imprinted in their minds when very young. They cannot replace this "mind map" and moving them may mean that they cannot find feeding grounds, hibernation sites, or mating areas. Moving turtles away from their homes can compromise their ability to survive.</p> <p>Snapping turtles, like other turtles, live for more than 100 years and in fact there is</p>

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	evidence that they can live more than 400 years. They need to live a long time because it takes more than 60 years on average for a turtle to replace itself- Less than 1% of turtle eggs survive and make it to adulthood.
<b>Blacklist Masters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet (attached)</li> <li>• Video Link(s): <a href="#">How You Can Help Ontario Turtles</a> and <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>	Students will become more aware of the importance of Snapping Turtles, and the role of their local and provincial government in environmental policy.
<b>Inquiry-Based Learning</b>	<p>Using <b>Guided Inquiry</b>, students will conduct independent research and answer the prompted questions about the Snapping Turtle Hunting ban. Students are encouraged to create change by sending their letters of concern to their local government officials explaining why wildlife conservation is important and how to further help turtles.</p> <p>Ask the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are Snapping Turtles Important?</li> <li>• If Snapping Turtles, or any species of turtle, is hunted what would happen to their ecosystem?</li> </ul>
<b>Turtle Stories</b>	<p>Have you visited a wetland or natural area recently? Did you see any Snapping Turtles? One way you can help to protect turtles in your community is by placing “Watch 4 Turtles” signs in highly turtle populated areas. 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>After completing <b>Level 1</b> (Ontario Turtle Identification) of the <b>Turtle Guardian Program</b>, students can move onto <b>Level 2</b> (Wetland Watchers). In this level the students learn the importance of wetland protection and how to protect turtle nests. They then can become official nest sitters and wetland watchers (when accompanied by an adult). 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



# Case Study: Snapping Turtle Hunt

**It was legal to hunt Snapping Turtles up until 2017, when the government changed the law to make it illegal to hunt them. This law change occurred due to pressure from many different conservation groups. There were many groups involved in this controversy. For this activity, you will research the ban on the Snapping Turtle hunt in Ontario.**

Answer the following questions:

1. Summarize what happened leading up to the ban of Snapping Turtle hunting in 2017.
  - a. Before 2017, there was no limit on how many turtles could be harvested in a year.
  - b. Leading up to the ban, the government received more than 13,460 comments from the public opposing the turtle hunt
  - c. Important dates: 2007 – the Endangered Species Act was passed, but did not include special concern species; 2009 – Snapping turtles are listed as special concern; 2010 – a review to ban the hunt was denied; 2012 – a petition with over 11,000 signatures was presented to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources asking for the ban of snapping turtle hunting and the town of Essex County chose to send a motion to the ministry requesting a ban on the hunt, as well that year, the proposed mandatory reporting of turtle hunting came into effect; 2014 the City of Kawartha Lakes also sends in a motion to ban snapping turtle hunting
2. What are the traditional uses of Turtles in Ontario?
  - a. Food, medicines, decorations, teachings, etc.
3. Who were the different groups that were involved in this issue?
  - a. The public
  - b. The town of Essex County
  - c. The ministry



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Answer the following questions:

1. Summarize what happened leading up to the ban of Snapping Turtle hunting in 2017.
2. What are the traditional uses of Turtles in Ontario?
3. Who were the different groups that were involved in this issue?
4. How do you think the government handled this issue?
5. Choose a side on this issue. Write a letter to your local government explaining your opinion on the issue, and what actions you think the government should take to further conserve the turtle populations.

Write some brief notes below, then create a separate document answering the above questions.

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## Here are some links to get your started:

### Government:

- [https://www.registrelp-sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual\\_sara/files/plans/mp\\_snapping%20turtle\\_e\\_proposed.pdf](https://www.registrelp-sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/plans/mp_snapping%20turtle_e_proposed.pdf)
- <http://docs.assets.eco.on.ca/reports/environmental-protection/2012-2013/2012-13-AR.pdf> (pages 88-91)

### Organizations:

- <https://davidsuzuki.org/press/ontario-decision-end-hunt-risk-snapping-turtle-necessary-move/#:~:text=April%203%2C%202017-,Ontario%20decision%20to%20end%20hunt%20of%20at%20risk%20snapping%20turtle,Herpetological%20Society%20and%20Ontario%20Nature>
- <https://www.huronstewardship.ca/2017/01/19/snapping-turtle-hunt-unsustainable/>
- <http://canadianherpetology.ca/news/doc/2017%20CHS%20SNTU%20BUFR%20Response.pdf> <https://ontarionature.org/top-5-reasons-to-end-the-snapping-turtle-hunt/>
- <https://ontarioturtle.ca/2014/02/snapperhunt/>

### News:

- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/ontario-bans-snapping-turtle-hunt-after-public-outcry-1.4053109>

### Similar Background Information From the US:

- <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/reptiles/commercial-harvest-of-snapping-turtles-in-virginia/?%20fbclid=IwAR3aNEIKyYZw4irFvitomnT59zI3zqyXXnXuFu0o5ky6G6NG5VjD71DHEw>

