

The Great Turtle Race

Grade 4 – Health and Physical Education



Lesson Details

Grade Level:	4	Curriculum Links:	Health and Physical Education	Time Needed:	1.5 hours
Learning Goal	Through a physically demanding game, students will learn about threats and challenges turtles face in the wild. Students will learn to empathize with turtles, as they maneuver through challenging obstacles, using a variety of different movement strategies to complete the course and teamwork to reach the finish line.				
Success Criteria	By the end of this activity, students will have used various movement concepts as they move through an obstacle course.				
Specific Expectations	<p><i>Movement Competence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the components of physical activities; • Endurance activities; • Perform different combinations of locomotor movements with and without equipment, alone and with others, moving at different speeds and levels, using different pathways, and going in different directions; • Apply a variety of tactical solutions to increase their chances of success as they participate in physical activities. 				
Materials Needed	Obstacle Course Outline (attached), Materials to Create Obstacle Course: Dodgeballs, Ping Pong Balls, Baskets, Heavy Moveable Objects.				

Lesson Description

Overview	By running through a variety of obstacle courses as a team, students will learn to empathize with turtles and understand the challenges they face in nature.
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before the activity, set-up the obstacle course according to the attached outline. 2. With the class, make a list of the obstacles' turtles may face as they grow up in nature. 3. Introduce the obstacle course to the students. Explain how each aspect of the course relates to the life cycle and threats turtles may face. 4. Next, split the class into six groups: two groups of turtles (4-6 students), two groups of predators (8 – 10 students), and two groups of Turtle Guardians (1-2 students). These are suggested numbers; you may use however many students for each group as you see fit. Each team should complete the course 10 times. This simulates the many years it takes turtles to go through this process in order to successfully replace itself in the population. For example, Snapping Turtles take about 60 years to replace themselves. 5. The predators (or cars) must remain at their phase of the course, the turtles move from phase to phase once properly complete, and the Turtle Guardians are free to flow throughout the course providing aid to the turtles. The Turtle Guardians, however, can only provide aid every 15 seconds to a turtle so students must use their teammates wisely. 6. This is a competition, so the team who took the least number of minutes to properly complete the course is the winner. 7. At the end of the game, discuss the population decline at each life cycle stage/threat interaction. 8. Go through the following discussion questions:

Lesson Description

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was it like doing the different tasks that a turtle must do for survival? - What are some differences between you and a turtle? Do you think any of those differences made it easier or harder to complete the tasks?
Background Information	Turtles can take between 30 and 60 years to replace themselves in nature – that means it takes this long for them to have one successful offspring. There are so many challenges that eggs, then hatchlings, and then juvenile turtles face in nature and which obstacles are made worse by humans. Only 0.06% of eggs hatch and survive to reach adulthood. Adult turtles do not face many natural threats and the older the turtle, the more eggs they typically lay. Therefore, adults are essential to keep populations stable. Turtles are, unfortunately, being hit on roads, removed from nature for pets, or are deliberately killed because people are afraid of them (E.g. Snapping Turtles).
Blacklist Masters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstacle Course Outline (attached) • Video Link(s): How You Can Help Ontario Turtles, Threats to Ontario Turtles, The Turtle Life Cycle, and Turtle Orientation • For more information, please visit https://www.turtleguardians.com/why-saving-turtles-is-important/
Place-Based Learning	Learning in a large open room or outdoors in a field. Students are encouraged to explore local wildlife areas to spot turtles in their natural habitat and try to identify the turtles current life stage.
Inquiry-Based Learning	Using Open Inquiry , students will move throughout the obstacle course and later reflect on the difficulty that turtles face when moving themselves in nature. Ask the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What threats do turtles face in nature? • What was it like doing the different tasks that a turtle must do for survival? • What are some differences between you and a turtle? Do you think any of those differences made it easier or harder to complete the tasks? • What can we do to help turtles?
Turtle Stories	In order to protect turtles from the dangers of crossing roads trained professionals build tunnels that run below roads to connect two water bodies (E.g. wetlands). You can help turtles from their early stages of life by building a nest cage protector and placing it over a nest in an unsafe area (E.g. the side of a road). Students are encouraged to share their experiences and pictures on the Turtle Stories website, found here: https://www.turtlestories.ca/
Turtle Guardian Program Links	After completing Level 1 (Ontario Turtle Identification) of the Turtle Guardian Program , students can move onto Level 2 (Wetland Watchers). In this level the students learn the importance of protecting, and specifically of how to protect turtle nests. They then can become official nest sitters (when accompanied by an adult) and learn how to build a nest cage protector. For more information, please visit https://www.turtleguardians.com/what-is-a-turtle-guardian/

My Notes

The Great Turtle Race: Obstacle Course

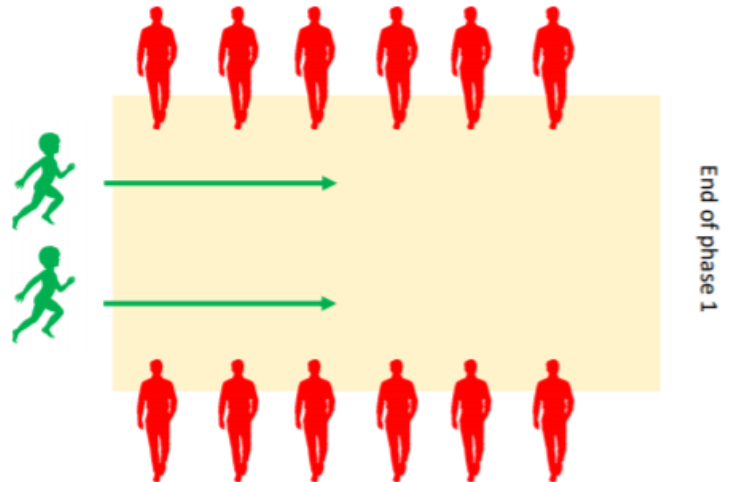
Phase 1 – Crossing the Road as an Adult Turtle

Students who are turtles will run across the “road” while students who are predators (or cars) throw dodgeballs at the turtles as they cross. Each predator/car is only allowed to throw one ball per turtle. If a turtle gets hit, the student must return to the start and try to cross again. Once across, the turtles can now proceed to the next phase.

For safety, make the road about 20-30 feet wide to help reduce the force of impact.

Turtle Guardians are allowed to help a turtle across the road. They are denoted by holding a pool noodle that the turtle must also hold while being helped.

When a Turtle Guardian is helping a turtle, any dodgeball that is thrown and hits that turtle does not count. After helping one turtle cross the road, the Turtle Guardian must wait 15 seconds before helping another turtle in the course.



Phase 2 – Digging the Nest

For the digging portion of the course, students must turn backwards and carry a heavy object between their legs across a distance of the instructors choosing. You may also have students choose to do a backwards “crab-crawl” with an object.

No Turtle Guardian help for this phase.



Phase 3 – Laying the Eggs

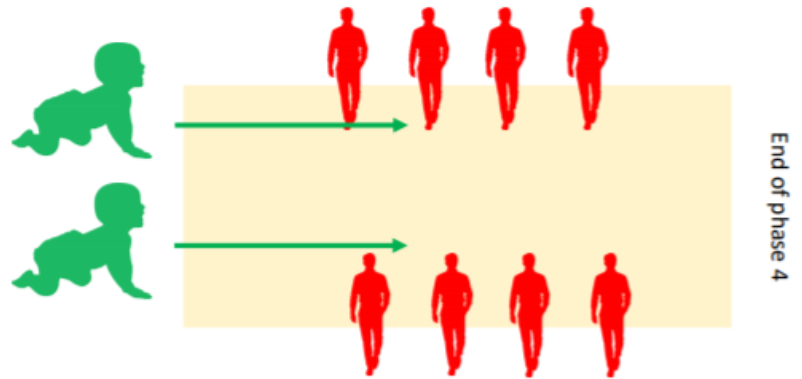
Next, students must transfer 10 ping pong balls to the end of the next leg of the obstacle course. Eggs will be at the beginning in a basket, and students must run the eggs, one at a time to an empty basket at the end. Once the students have run 10 ping pong balls over, they must bring their basket back to the beginning, refilling the ping pong balls for the next student, and returning the empty basket to the end.



Turtle Guardians may provide aid by helping to carry one egg from bucket to bucket at the same time as a turtle. The two students must carry only one egg each and hold an end of the pool noodle. After helping one turtle carry their eggs, the Turtle Guardian must wait 15 seconds before helping another turtle in the course.

Phase 4 – Crossing the Road as a Hatching Turtle

This obstacle is similar to the first stage, whereby the turtle must cross the road while avoiding dodgeballs thrown by predators, however the turtles must crawl on hands/knees or hands/feet to simulate the increased difficulty small hatchlings would have with moving. To make it easier for the hatchlings, you can reduce the number of predators lined up on the side or move the predators further away.



Turtle Guardians are allowed to help a turtle across the road. They are denoted by holding a pool noodle that the turtle must also hold when being helped. When a Turtle Guardian is helping a turtle, any dodgeball that is thrown and hits that turtle does not count. After helping one turtle cross the road, the Turtle Guardian must wait 15 seconds before helping another turtle in the course.

Phase 5 – Escaping Predators

In this obstacle, the turtle runs through a group of seated predators that are dispersed amongst the course. The predators can wave their arms in attempt to “tag” the turtle as they run. If turtles are tagged, they must start that phase over again.



Turtle Guardians are allowed to help a turtle cross through the group of predators. They are denoted by holding a pool noodle that the turtle must also hold when being helped. When a Turtle Guardian is helping a turtle, any predators that tag the turtle does not count. After helping one turtle cross, the Turtle Guardian must wait 15 seconds before helping another turtle in the course.

After completing this last phase, students should run back to phase 1, beginning the course again, simulating the many years turtles will go through this life cycle.

