

The Unlucky Turtle

Grade 1 – Languages



Lesson Details

Grade Level:	1	Curriculum Links:	Languages, Science and Technology	Time Needed:	1.5 hours
Learning Goal	Through the reading of an oral story, students will gain an understanding about the life cycle of a turtle and the threats against them.				
Success Criteria	By the end of the lesson, students should be able to retell the main details of the oral story, as it pertains to the lifecycle of a turtle. Students will understand turtles are living things, which can be influenced by humans.				
Specific Expectations	<p><i>Languages – Oral Communication: Listening to Understand</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the information and ideas in oral texts by retelling the story or restating the information, including the main idea; • Extend understanding of oral texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experiences, to other familiar texts, including print and visual texts, and to the world around them. <p><i>Science and Technology – Understanding Life Systems</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and compare the basic needs of humans and other living things, including the need for air, water, food, warmth, and space, using a variety of methods and resources. 				
Materials Needed	The Unlucky Turtle Story (attached), Pencil, Notebook.				

Lesson Description

Overview	After reading <i>The Unlucky Turtle</i> story, the students will write down the main ideas, and the threats they remember from the story. As a class, you will try and rewrite the story removing the threats to turtles.
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read <i>The Unlucky Turtle</i> story out loud to the class. 2. Either individually in their notebooks, or together as a class, ask the students to recall what the story was about. What was the main ideas? What threats do turtles face in their life cycle? 3. Next, as a class, brainstorm how to mitigate these threats to turtles, and treat their environment with care. 4. If time permits, write a new story called “The Lucky Turtle” as a class. This story should have limited threats and show turtle success throughout their lifecycle.
Blacklist Masters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Unlucky Turtle Story (attached) • Video Link(s): How You Can Help Ontario Turtles, Threats to Ontario Turtles, and The Turtle Life Cycle • For more information, please visit https://www.turtleguardians.com/sample-page/
Place-Based Learning	Students should become more conscious about local wildlife conservation and learn how they can help turtles thrive in their community. Invite a local wildlife conservation expert in to discuss conservation efforts with the class.
Inquiry-Based Learning	Using Guided Inquiry , the students will first listen, then work together as a class to discuss the different elements of The Unlucky Turtle story.
	Ask the students:

Lesson Description

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were the main ideas of the story?• What threats do turtles face in their life cycle?• How can we help to mitigate these threats to turtles?
Turtle Stories	What threats exist against turtles? Nesting is a large issue as most female turtles lay their eggs along the roadside. You can help protect turtle nests by building a nest cage protector and placing it over a nest in an unsafe area. Students are encouraged to share their experiences, pictures, and work 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 Unlucky Turtle

Shelley the turtle was born twice. All that she remembers from her first birth is the “thump” as she dropped as an egg into a sandy pit with all 30 of her brothers and sisters. Then there was a whole lotta something as her little body grew inside the egg, but also a whole lotta nothing as she couldn’t explore much in her egg home.



Weeks went by as Shelley grew and grew inside her shell. She often heard the rumblings of cars as they sped by on the blacktop of the county road. But the scariest moment came one night when all around her she heard the scratching of a raccoon and the *crunch* of it eating many of her brothers and sisters. Somehow Shelley and a few of her nestmates remained untouched, until an incredible urge overtook them that the time had come to be born, again.

The night that Shelley was born again, a full moon shone brightly in the night sky. She broke out of her shell with precision and intensity only to find that there was yet another obstacle in her path. The sand and gravel that had insulated her so well, now blocked her way out and kept her below ground. She breathed shallowly as her little baby claws scratched away the sand and gravel as the moon pulled her forward. Finally, she broke through to the surface and into the night air.

All around, her remaining brothers and sisters were breathing in the night air too. All of a sudden a rumbling was felt under her little feet as a giant metal beast zoomed past her nose. This frightened Shelley, and she knew she had to do something but what. There was no time to think. Shelley’s instincts kicked in and she scuttled off in a direction. Another rumbling was heard and this time a metal beast came right over top of her, Shelley gulped and closed her eyes. In an instant it was over, the beast had missed. Shelley opened her eyes and continued to move in the direction she felt called to.



The sun rose and set again before Shelley knew she had arrived. She knew she had arrived when she felt the cool liquid cover her body, head to tail. Moving her little feet Shelley swam through the water but did so quickly, looking for shelter from the scary expanse of open water that lay before her. Out of nowhere a fish swam directly towards her. Shelley

dove down and swam for her life. The fish circled back towards her, but Shelley kept on swimming into a tight matting of pickerelweed and nestled in amongst the roots.

She hid amongst the roots for a long time, but soon she felt a new calling, hunger. Shelley swam close to shore until she found some elodea. A common plant that grows in the water. She took a bite. Delicious. She swam up to the surface, took a breath, and miraculously caught a water strider in her mouth. This is how Shelley spent the rest of her summer. But summer went by in an instant and it wasn't long before Shelley began to feel slower than normal. The water was cooling and so was her blood. She knew she had to get warm. Shelley stopped eating and began moving more and more slowly. Then one day after many days of not eating she took a deep breath and dove to the bottom of the pond, burying herself with only her head exposed to take periodic breaths through her mouth's protective membrane.



7 Years Later...

One spring Shelley emerged for a breath of the fresh spring air. The leaves were barely budding on the trees, but Shelley felt different. She knew the time had come to make her own family and she wanted a big one. First, she had to find a mate, but did any male turtles even live in this pond, she wasn't sure. She had seen a few when she was younger, but now the pressure was on and she really needed to know. She swam around the edge of the pond and came across a larger male. After seeing each other, they began moving their heads side to side in an ancient courtship ritual.

A month after mating Shelley knew that her eggs were ready to be laid. She remembered the feel of sand and gravel on her claws and began searching for a similar place. Shelley pulled herself out of the water late one night and began crawling up the slope feeling the hard ground below her. A strangely new yet familiar rumbling could be heard in the distance but would only last for a few moments. Shelley climbed on. Suddenly there was a steep incline and Shelley climbed up. A metal beast zoomed past her narrowly missing her nose. Shelley crawled slowly across the flat rock. Another beast zoomed right over top of her. Shelley gulped again. This could be it. Nevertheless, she knew she had to build her nest. Finally, the rock gave way to loose gravel, and Shelley began to dig and dig and dig. Tired, she fell into a trance and one by one all of her 47 eggs dropped into the earth.



Shelley was born again.

