



# SEA TURTLES

## Learning Activity:

### Turtles on Vacation

<b>Activity Type</b>	Travel brochure
<b>Focus Areas</b>	Social studies, language arts
<b>Time Required</b>	Two segments (research and design), each requiring 30–45 minutes

## ● Overview

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Students will be assigned to research different areas of the world where sea turtles are found. Using their understanding of ecotourism and their creativity, they will then design a travel brochure for their assigned areas, showcasing sea turtles as the primary attraction. Through this project, students will learn about ecotourism and how considering the needs of both people and animals can result in a healthy, shared environment.

## ● Objective

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### At the completion of the activity, students should be able to:

- Identify and describe various geographical locations around the world where sea turtles are found.
- Explain how animals and people can benefit one another through ecotourism.

## ● Subject and Standards

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### C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards

- D2.Geo.2.3-5: Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their environmental characteristics.
- D2.Geo.4.3-5: Explain how culture influences the way people modify and adapt to their environments.
- D2.Geo.8.3-5: Explain how human settlements and movements relate to the locations and use of various natural resources.



## Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts

- L. 3.3/4.3/5.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- RI. 3.5: Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
- RI. 3.7: Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
- RI. 5.7: Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- W. 3.1/4.1/5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- W. 3.2/4.2/5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- W. 5.7: Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- W. 3.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

## ● Materials Needed

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- [Sea Turtle Educator's Resource Guide](#) (for background reading)
- Internet access or pre-printed webpages with relevant information about areas of the world with sea turtle ecotourism opportunities: the Mesoamerican Reef, Coastal East Africa, the Coral Triangle, the Galapagos Islands, and the Gulf of California (see links on page 5)
- Printed copy of the Research Planner Worksheet (included at the end of this activity)
- Per student: paper, writing utensil, and coloring supplies (colored pencils and markers)



## ● Vocabulary

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- **Ecotourism:** responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and promotes the welfare of local people
- **Habitat:** a natural environment in which plants and animals live, breed, and get their food, water, and shelter
- **Hatchling:** an animal that recently emerged from an egg

## ● Activity Procedure

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### Part 1: Introduction and Preparation

- Consider how familiar your students are with tourism. Explain how tourism can have both negative and positive impacts on an area's surrounding communities. For example:
  - Beaches, being one of the most popular destinations for travelers, are continuously being developed, which can destroy animal habitats like sea turtle nesting beaches. However, one benefit to an increase in visitors is that these tourists visit local attractions and spend money on things like food and souvenirs, which helps provide income and employment for the local people who live there.
- One type of tourism is ecotourism (see vocabulary definition above). Introduce students to the term and ask them if they have ever traveled to a place that offers ecotourism opportunities, or if they know whether any ecotourism opportunities exist in your area. A common example of ecotourism is a nature tour through protected areas (like national parks) to view animals in their natural habitat.
- Direct the ecotourism discussion toward sea turtles. Sea turtles can be found all over the world. However, there are a few regions in particular where they are often seen due to sandy beaches that are perfect for nesting and warm tropical waters that are ideal for feeding. These areas include the Mesoamerican Reef, Coastal East Africa, the Coral Triangle, the Galapagos Islands, and the Gulf of California. These locations are also heavily traveled tourist destinations. See links on page 5 for additional information about these areas.



- Discuss the fact that as tourists become more interested in sea turtles, local communities can create employment and income from ecotourism.
  - There are various ways that local communities can benefit from their proximity to sea turtles without harming them, including ocean tours, nesting beach patrols, and monitoring of hatchlings.
  - Unfortunately, some communities are profiting from sea turtles in harmful ways, such as illegally collecting and trading their meat, eggs, and shells. Sea turtle parts are often turned into souvenirs, such as jewelry or hair combs made from their shells, and then sold to tourists to make money. By creating safe, alternative ways to profit from sea turtles, these communities will no longer be dependent on sea turtle products for income, helping stop the turtle trade.

## Part 2: Activity

In this two-segment activity, students will help sea turtles by playing the role of travel agents—designing brochures that entice people to visit the areas where sea turtles live and enjoy turtle-friendly activities.

### FIRST SEGMENT: RESEARCH

- For this portion of the activity, students will research one of five identified sea turtle regions of the world. They may choose which of the five areas they'd like to research, or you can assign them an area. This activity can be done individually, or students can work in groups.
- Make sure each student has access to either the internet or other resources from which to read and research the geographic areas where sea turtles are found. You can also create printed handouts for students to reference, using information from the webpages provided on the next page.





- Students will research one of the following areas of the world. If internet access is available, use the links provided to go to the WWF information webpage about this area:
  - [Mesoamerican Reef](#) (lies within the Caribbean Sea and touches the coasts of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras)
  - [Coastal East Africa](#) (western Indian Ocean)
  - [Coral Triangle](#) (western Pacific Ocean, including the waters of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, and the Solomon Islands)
  - [The Galapagos](#) (600 miles off the coast of Ecuador)
  - [Gulf of California](#) (the area of the Pacific Ocean that separates Baja California from Mexico)
- Distribute copies of the Research Planner Worksheet provided at the end of this activity. Direct the students to complete their graphic organizers as they research information on their assigned areas of the world. Completing this worksheet will help them prepare for designing their brochures.

### **SECOND SEGMENT: BROCHURE DESIGN**

- Distribute a plain sheet of paper to each student. Provide assistance with tri-folding it into a brochure, if needed. Instruct students to use the paper, writing utensil, and coloring supplies to design a brochure.
- Ask students to use the information they found while doing their research (using their completed Research Planner Worksheets) as a guide to design a brochure that would make people want to visit that area of the world. They should include interesting information about the area that would appeal to traveling tourists.
- Remind students that the focus of their brochures should be around how sea turtles are relevant to that area. They should include descriptions of the role sea turtles play in the area's livelihood as well as suggestions for safe sea turtle activities for ecotourism.



### Part 3: Discussion and Assessment

- Have the students share their brochures with one another and discuss why their areas are appealing to tourists who are interested in sea turtles.
- Encourage students to draw conclusions about how sea turtles and humans can help each other. Sea turtles can rely on humans for protection, and humans can rely on sea turtles to make money in safe ways that don't harm them.
- Expand comprehension by asking students to think of other examples of how humans can benefit from the animals around them without disrupting or disturbing the livelihood of the animals. Examples include whale watching, zip-lining through the rain forest, or visiting animal sanctuaries.

### Extended Learning Options

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- Add a third segment to the activity that incorporates a speaking component. Have the groups of students create a short presentation in the format of a commercial, where they pose as travel agents and promote their area as a great place to visit and engage with sea turtles.
- Start a class fundraiser to protect sea turtles and other wildlife and their habitats, using WWF's online fundraising tool, Panda Nation. Learn more at [www.pandanation.org](http://www.pandanation.org).
- Download the [WWF Together app](#) and explore the sea turtle segment. Use these interactive tools to help kids learn more about sea turtles and the threats they face.

### Additional Background Info

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You can use the information found at the links below to enhance your discussion with the class, or you may want to share some links directly with students if you determine they are grade-level appropriate.

- **Article:** [Sea Turtles Worth More Alive than Dead, Says WWF](#)—assesses the revenue of marine turtle ecotourism
- **Article:** [Turtles No Longer Turn Into Souvenirs in Dominican Republic](#)—celebrates how one country's government has developed a campaign to crack down on illegal sea turtle trade

For more fun classroom activities with a focus on wild species and conservation, visit [wildclassroom.org](http://wildclassroom.org).





# SEA TURTLES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ● SEA TURTLE ECOTOURISM: Research Planner Worksheet

My ecotourism location is: \_\_\_\_\_

**Where is it?**

**What types of animals live here?**

**Why would this be a nice place to visit?**

**Why is this area important?**

**How do people use this area?**

**How can sea turtles help create tourism?**