

Lesson 5: Turtles

Getting Started

? Big Ideas

- How do people use stories to explain their environments?
- How are living things designed to live and grow in their environment?



Facts and Definitions

- A **myth** is a traditional story that can explain natural events.

⦿ Skills

- Compare language and oral traditions from different cultures. (LA)
- Read classic and contemporary works. (LA)
- Produce a summary of a text. (LA)

✂ Materials

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ <i>How the Turtle Got Its Shell</i> by Justine Fontes, Ron Fontes, and Keiko Motoyama | ✓ <i>Tornado</i> by Betsy Byars, Doron Ben-Ami |
| ✓ crayons or colored pencils | ✓ egg carton |
| ✓ glue | ✓ green construction paper |
| ✓ green or brown tissue paper | ✓ journal |
| ✓ paper bowl | |

Introduction

Tell your child that in this chapter, Tornado has a meeting with a turtle. Ask your child what he knows about turtles and their habitats.

Activities

Reading and Questions

Ask your child to read Chapter 4 in the book and then ask her the following questions. Remind your child to answer in complete sentences.

1. Where does Tornado get the turtle?
 - Emma Lou left it out on the porch.
2. Why does Tornado not listen to Emma Lou when she asks him to drop the turtle?
 - She was not using the same voice as her father.
3. How does Pete get the turtle out of Tornado's mouth?
 - He says, using his father's voice, "Drop it!"
4. Does Tornado know he is picking up a turtle? How do you know?
 - Answers will vary.
5. Why does Tornado run around the yard after he drops the turtle?
 - Answers will vary.

Activity 1: Journal Entry

Ask your child to write and illustrate his chapter summary in his journal.

Activity 2: Turtle Research

Give your child the page called "Turtle Research." Help him locate information about turtles in books and on the Internet. Tell him that many animals' designs help them to live in their environment. Help your child fill in the facts on the turtle's shell based on your research.

Activity 3: How the Turtle Got Its Shell

Describe that long ago people told stories that explained how things in nature came to be. We call these stories **myths**. Different cultures around the world have different myths. Various cultures have myths that describe how the turtle got its shell. Let your child read the book, *How the Turtle Got Its Shell*, and then ask him the following questions:

- Retell one of the myths.
- Which myth was your favorite? Why?
- Which myth do you think was most believable? Why?
- In what ways were the stories similar? Different?

Reread your child's favorite myth from the book and then help him fill out the "Story Map Graphic Organizer" page based on the structure of the myth.

Activity 4: My Own Myth (Ideas)

Ask your child to think of a myth that describes how the turtle got its shell. Tell him that the focus of his writing should be on the ideas, as opposed to grammar or choice of words. Explain that generating ideas is a very important element in writing. Tell him to be sure that his story has a theme, message, or main idea. His writing should support the main idea with details that get the reader's attention.

Explain that the main idea or theme of this writing piece is *how the turtle got its shell*. His writing should remain focused with details that explain how the turtle got its shell. Tell him that the best ideas are those that are unique and interesting. You might want to provide support with the writing, especially with spelling challenging words.

Give him the "My Own Myth" graphic organizer to help him record his ideas. Then he can write his story. If your child struggles with writing, he can dictate his story while you record it. Remember that the focus of this writing assignment is on ideas, not grammar or spelling.

Use the following criteria for assessing the ideas in your child's writing:

- Ideas are creative and new (not just copied from one of the myths read out of the book)
- Relevant details are provided
- Writing stays focused
- Ideas are connected

When your child has finished his writing, ask him to read his story. Ask him how well he did in each area related to *ideas* (described in the assessment above). Encourage him to think about ways to improve upon any weak areas. Then let him make changes and rewrite the story. You can also provide suggestions for improvement.

Wrapping Up

Ask your child what he has learned about turtles that he did not know before. Ask him to read his own turtle myth to the family.

Art Extension

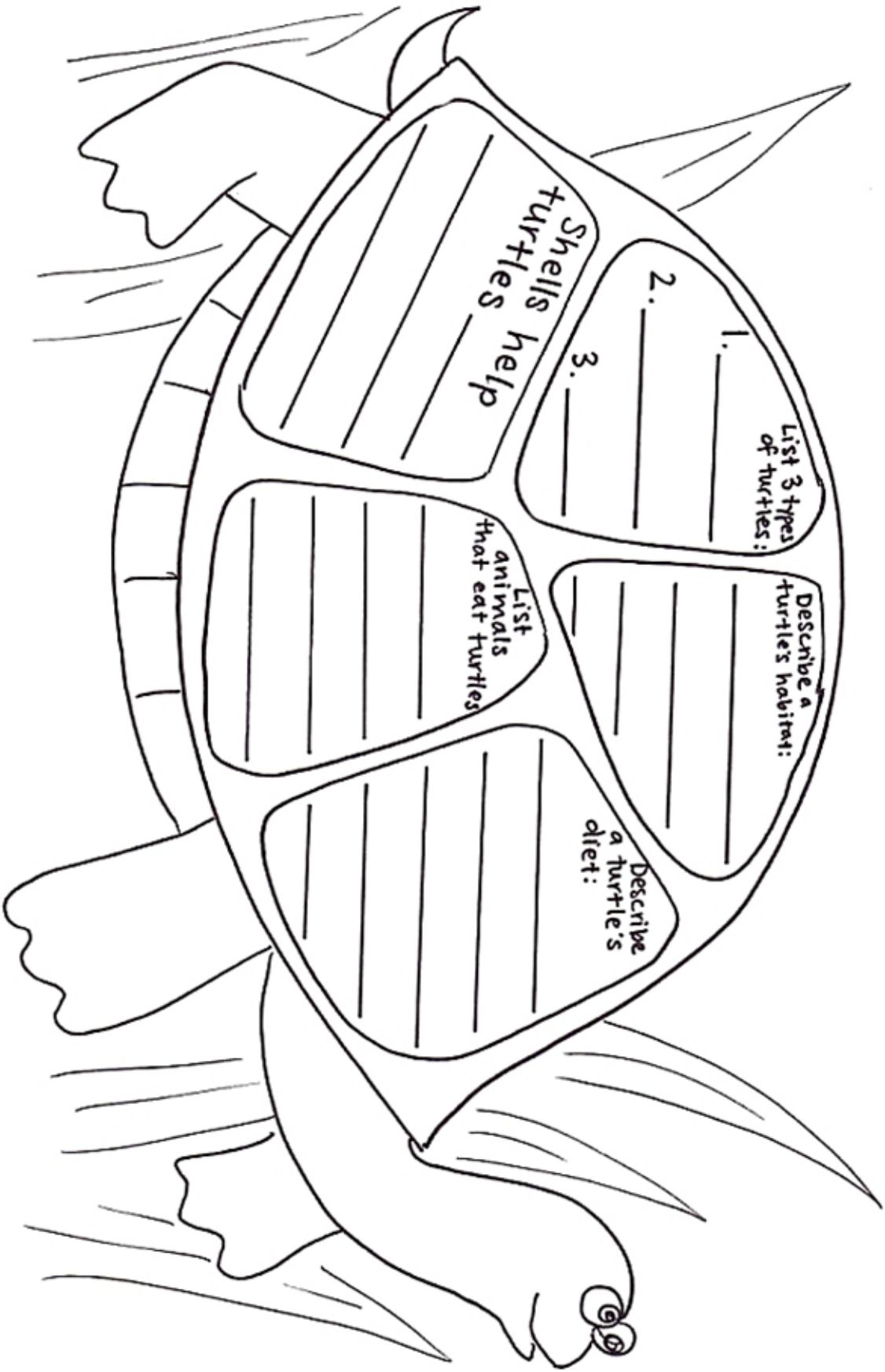
Let your child tear green and brown tissue paper into half-inch pieces. Different shades of green and brown will add variety. Cut a single egg holder from an egg carton. Glue the small strips of tissue paper to egg holder.

Using green construction paper, cut four small legs, a head, and a pointed tail. Fold each about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in and glue or tape these to the inside of the turtle shell. Now you have a baby turtle.

To make a mommy turtle you can repeat but use a paper bowl instead of an egg holder for the shell.

Turtle Research

Directions: Locate information about turtles in books and / or on the Internet and fill it in below.



Story Map Graphic Organizer

Setting:

Characters:

Problem:

Event:

Event:

Event:

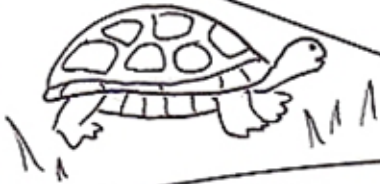
Solution:

My Own Myth

Directions: Think of your own creative story about how the turtle got its shell.

Setting:

Characters:



Problem:

Event:

Event:

Event:

Solution: