



Turtle Trek - Activity

Adaptation Adventures of Sea Turtles

Background Information:

Every organism has a variety of adaptations that are suited to its specific living condition.

Adaptations are the behaviors and physical characteristics that allow organisms to live successfully in their environments. All animals must be able to obtain food and water, protect themselves from harm, withstand the climate and reproduce young so that the species doesn't become extinct.

Imagine you are traveling to a far-off land where everything is different from what you're used to. What would you do to survive and feel comfortable? You might need to adjust to the weather, the language, and the culture. Similarly, animals and plants face these challenges too, but they can't change as quickly as we can. Instead, they have adapted over many generations to fit into their specific habitats like true masters of survival.

An adaptation can be a body part, body covering, body function, or behavior that increases an animal's chances of survival in a particular place. Animals develop these stations over time to match the environment where they live. The process of **natural selection** means that animals with **traits** that help them survive are more likely to live and pass on those traits to their **offspring**. Those adaptations happen over long periods of time, as animals adapt to the conditions of the environment. It takes many generations for adaptations to develop.

But, why is understanding adaptations crucial? Well, it teaches us not only about the natural world but also about the delicate balance of ecosystems. By learning how animals and plants adapt, we can appreciate the importance of preserving their habitats and the rich biodiversity of our planet

Essential Question:

- How do each species of sea turtle's beaks differ from each other? What types of foods are easiest to be eaten depending on the beak type?

Materials

- Container
- Water
- "Food Items"
 - Sea shells (Loggerhead)
 - Felt (glued to bottom of container) (Green)
 - Sponge / corals (Hawksbill)
 - Plastic bag (leatherback)



- Crabs (Kemp’s Ridley)
- “Beaks”
 - Rubber hot glove (Loggerhead)
 - Tweezers (Hawksbill)
 - Salad tongs (Kemp’s Ridley)
 - Hair clips (Green)
 - Use hands (Leatherback)
- Worksheet

Directions

1. Get a container and fill at least halfway with water, ensure that the felt is already glued to the bottom.
2. Place each of the “food items” into the container of water.
3. Have the students use each of the different “beaks” and try to “eat” each of the different food items that are in the container. Ask them to write down their observations of which food items were easiest to eat depending on the beak.
4. After ___ minutes - go through and ask them which beaks they think represent which species, and which food types they think each sea turtle species eats from the activity. Explain the importance of beak shape depending on the different sea turtle species.

Activity

For each sea turtle species, identify which items would represent their beak. With each “beak”, try to “eat” the different food items. Take notes on which worked well or didn’t.

X : doesn’t work well

O : works, but not great

✓ : works well

Sea Turtle Species	“Beak”	Sea Shells	Felt/Neoprene	Sponge	Plastic bag	Crabs