

“Simon Says Move like a Turtle” lesson plan

Duration: 20-40 minutes

Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate the stages in the life cycle of a turtle
- Students will describe the life cycle of a variety of animals, including insects, amphibians, birds, and mammals
- Students will compare changes in the appearance and behaviour of various animals as they go through a complete life cycle
- Students will describe the locomotion of various animals

Background:

The stages of an animal's life are called a life cycle. A turtle's look and behaviour changes as it goes through a complete life cycle. Like turtles, students will hatch from an egg and dig their way out of the nest, swim using their four webbed feet, hide in their shells for protection, walk slowly, bask (lie) in the sun on a log or a rock, and bury their eggs in the sand or soil. In this activity, students will find their inner turtle and learn to move like snapping turtles, Blanding's turtles, map turtles, and painted turtles in the different stages of their life cycle.

Materials:

- Large space for moving such as a gymnasium or outdoor yard

Procedure:

1. Ask students how the look and behaviour of turtles, like snapping turtles, Blanding's turtles, map turtles, and painted turtles, change as they go through each stage in the life cycle from eggs, to hatchlings (babies), to juveniles (young), and finally to adults who mate and produce eggs.
2. In this variation of “Simon Says”, students will learn to move like a turtle as they go through a complete life cycle. Review and demonstrate the “Turtle Actions” section below so that students feel comfortable performing the actions with the given cues.
3. One person is designated as “Simon”. Have players form a circle around Simon where they are an arm's length apart from each other so they have room to move safely.
4. Simon tells the players what turtle action they must perform by saying “Simon says...” However, players must only obey instructions that begin with the words “Simon says.”
For example, if Simon says “Simon says swim like a turtle” then players must perform the action of swimming like a turtle. But if Simon simply says “swim like a turtle” without first saying “Simon says,” players must not move.

Turtle Actions:

- “Swim like a turtle”
While lying on your stomach, use your arms and legs to swim like a turtle using all four of your webbed feet.
- “Hide in your shell like a turtle”
Crouch your body and bring your head, arms, and legs close together to protect yourself inside your round turtle shell.
- “Walk slowly like a turtle”
With your hands and feet on the ground, move slowly like a turtle.
- “Lie in the sun like a turtle”
Lie on your stomach and enjoy the sun like a turtle basking on a log or a rock!
- “Bury your eggs like a turtle”
Pretend to dig a hole in the sand or soil and then cover it to bury your eggs in the nest.
- “Hatch like a turtle”
Turtle hatchlings use a temporary white-coloured egg tooth to break their egg shell and then must dig their way out of the nest they were buried in. This tooth is found outside of their mouth, underneath their nose (see photo below of map turtle hatchling). To do this, nod your head to break your egg shell and then dig upwards to leave your nest.

