

CURRICULUM ACTIVITY CHAPTER FIVE

HEALTHY HABITATS

TEACHER BACKGROUND

The activities included in this chapter address the concept of habitat needs required by wetland species, particularly the turtle. This activity document outlines the importance of food, shelter, water, and space as the four main components of habitat. Traditional Knowledge of the lunar calendar and an understanding of an animal's habitat needs are also addressed.

Grade four classrooms will emphasize wetland habitats, the communities that depend on them, and the impact of habitat change and degradation on interconnectedness.

Grade six classrooms will emphasize the importance of biodiversity in wetland habitats.

Additional Resources:

Adopt-A-Pond Turtle Curriculum website Unit 2: Turtle Biology, Section 4: What's For Dinner ?

Activity 6:
Today's Picnic Special Are...

Activity 7:
Turtle Appetites

http://www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/turtle_curriculum/unit2b.pdf

ACTIVITY

5.1 MISKWADESI/ A'NÓ:WARA FINDS HABITAT

Using a direct instruction approach, this activity reinforces an understanding of turtle needs in a habitat and the need for biodiversity in a wetland.

Food, Shelter, Water, and Space Chart

Materials:

- *Walking with Miskwaadesi* or *Walking with A'nó:wara* storybook

Steps:

Read chapter five of *Walking with Miskwaadesi* or *Walking with A'nó:wara* to the students. Discuss with the class the needs of living things including food, shelter, water, and space.

Draw up a chart with columns titled food, shelter, water, and space. Using the following questions to stimulate discussion, fill in the columns with student responses.

1. What kinds of food might a turtle need?
2. Where might a turtle find shelter?
3. What kind of water does a turtle need?
4. What kind of living space does a turtle require?

Discuss with the class some of the issues that turtles face in relation to each of their habitat needs. Record these under the appropriate column as well.

Steps:

Take students outside to a field or to the gym. Divide the class in half and have students stand on opposite sides of the play area.

Place five objects (ie. beanbags) on the ground in a line on opposite sides of the play area. These represent the habitat needs of a turtle including food, shelter, space, and water, with one disguised bag representing pollution. The pollution bag must be discretely denoted as such (ie. sticky note on bottom, or chalk "x" etc.).

The objective of the game is to obtain the four desirable beanbags, representing the different aspects of healthy habitat, from the other side before the opposing team collects the beanbags from their opposing team.

Once a student picks up a beanbag from the other side, he/she must take it back to the team's safe zone without being tagged by the opposing team. If a student is tagged, they must give back the beanbag and go back to the other side and try again. If, or when, the pollution

bag is brought over to the team's safe zone, that player must join the other team. When a beanbag is successfully brought over to the safe zone, it cannot be removed by the other team.

The process of collecting beanbags from the other side continues until all of the healthy beanbags are collected.

5.2 HABITAT FOR A TURTLE

This activity reinforces Traditional Knowledge of the lunar calendar and an understanding of an animal's habitat needs through the use of an arts-based learning strategy, sketching to learn.

Materials:

- Paper and writing tools

CURRICULUM ACTIVITY CHAPTER SIX

TURTLE STORIES

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Many teachings and stories are sacred to First Nation peoples. These stories have been handed down orally for hundreds of years to help children and youth learn teachings and traditions. Many First Nations stories share these characteristics:

- They often include four events because the number four is very important to First Nations people;
- The stories reflect life and/or nature and relationships with it;
- These teachings are based upon facts and truths, beginning in the past to explain an event;
- They are used to teach a lesson about how one should behave, involving changes of our inner spirit;
- Stories often involve a trickster-type of character who is part human, part spirit, and can turn him/herself into other shapes or forms. The trickster often makes mistakes as part of the lesson which is taught.

Talking Stick:

In traditional times, a storyteller would often have a talking stick or some other mnemonic device to help remember

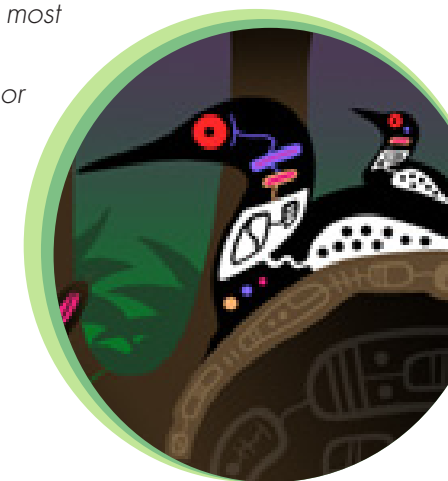
Steps:

Have students draw the outline of a turtle's shell on a blank sheet of paper. Keep in mind the twenty-eight small scutes, thirteen large scutes, and their cultural significance.

Students fill in the thirteen scutes with a different aspect of habitat in each scute, as well as things turtles should avoid. These should relate to food, water, space, and shelter.

Students also answer these two questions under the shell:

1. What did you learn about turtle habitat needs?
2. What do you think is the most important component of habitat for Miskwaadesi or A'nó:wara and her turtle family members? Why?



a story. Talking sticks also are used in circles where only one person may speak at a time, while everyone else listens carefully. The speaker holds the talking stick and passes it along when he/she is finished.

Turtle Island Conservation's *The Ways of Knowing Guide Earth's Teachings* outlines the importance of storytelling:

Cultural stories not only direct personality, social order, action and ethics; they also set out the proper context for a person's life. Cultural stories and Traditional Teachings give life structure and meaning. They are the oral reference libraries that account for stories, legends, prophecies, ceremonies, songs, dances, language, and the philosophy of the people. (24)

Additional Resources:

Nanabush: How the Turtle Got its Shell. *Ways of Knowing Guide Earth's Teachings.* Joseph McLellan. Pemmican Publications. 1994 ISBN: 0921827407

Keepers of the Earth. Caduto, Michael and Joseph Bruchac. Fulcrum Inc Colorado. 1989 ISBN 1-55591-027-0