

Turtle Words

Activity: To be conducted by the classroom teacher before, during, and after a class visit to the Aquarium.

Goal: Students will learn differences between turtles and tortoises through observations and record their observations.

Louisiana Science Content Standards and Benchmarks

SI-E-A1 – Asking appropriate questions about organisms and events in the environment

SI-E-A5 – Using data, including numbers and graphs, to explain observations and experiments

LS-E-A4 – Recognizing that there is great diversity among organisms

LS-E-B2 – Observing, comparing, and grouping plants and animals according to likenesses and/or differences

LS-E-C2 – Describing how the features of some plants and animals enable them to live in specific habitats

Materials:

Small squares of construction paper (various colors)

Yarn

Die-cuts of turtles/tortoises (enough so that half the class has one turtle each, and half has one tortoise each)

Jar

Slips of paper

Crayons or colored pencils

Bulletin Board (divided and decorated – Divided into 3 columns, one for tortoises, one for turtles, and a middle one that says “Both”)

Glue or tape

Preparation:

Make die cuts of turtles and tortoises. Create bulletin board, and gather yarn. Create small construction paper squares and slips of paper. Find some children’s books about turtles and tortoises. When booking visit to Aquarium, check with Education staff regarding turtle/tortoise presentation by emailing tleblanc@auduboninstitute.org.

Procedure:

Introduce students to turtles and tortoises by reading books about them, and talking about them with students. Have students compare them through observations. How are they similar? How are they different?

Generate a word and phrase list that describes turtles and tortoises. Some words will fit both (ex. reptile), others should fit either or (ex. lives on land). Teacher may want to generate some words on his/her own, and have students generate some for the list. Record each word on the list onto a slip of paper. Put the papers in the jar.

At the Aquarium:

Have students attend a Creature Feature program, featuring turtles and tortoises. Have students make observations of each and review with them how they are similar and different. Visit the Amazon Gallery, Mississippi Gallery, and Gulf of Mexico Galleries to look at other turtles if there is time. Students generate drawings of either turtles or tortoises based on their observations.

Back at School:

Divide the class evenly into turtles and tortoises. Pull words out of jar one at a time and have the class tell where the word should go on the bulletin board. If the word applies to both turtles and tortoises, it should be placed there. Distribute slips of construction paper and die-cut turtles and tortoises to students. Have each group copy their words onto the squares (tortoise group copies tortoise words.) Both groups can use words from the “both” category. Attach squares to the end of yarn strings (one word per string) and attach the other end of the yarn to the die-cut animal. Have students decorate their die-cuts. Display student work.