



THE LIFE CYCLE OF SEA TURTLES

Grades: 2-5

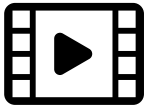
Objective: All living creatures have a live cycle. They pass through different stages of life before reaching adulthood. In this lesson, students will learn about life cycles and explore the specific lifecycle of a sea turtle, one of the animals that lives at the Mote Laboratory & Aquarium.

Sources: PBS Kids, Generation Genius, Primary Learning, CILC



Materials and Resources:

- Learning About Life Cycle Videos



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hSnpkGyXx4>

<https://www.pbs.org/video/life-cycles-of-different-animals-3rd-grade-science-7laemq/>

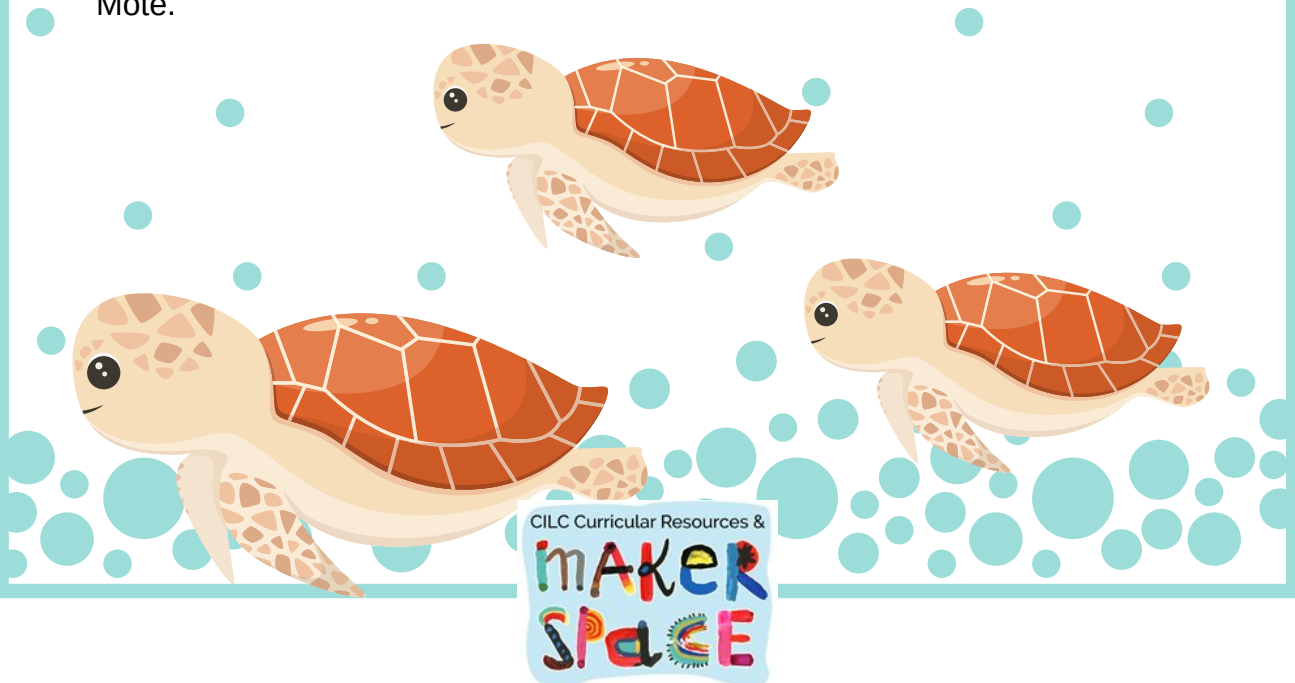
- "The Life Cycle of a Sea Turtle" Reading Comprehension Worksheet

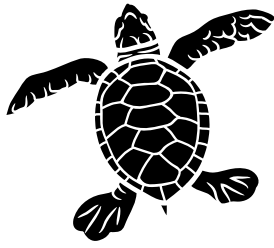
Vocabulary:

- adulthood
- childhood
- egg
- hatching
- hatchling
- life cycle
- predator
- spawning

Lesson Activities:

- Watch and discuss one of the videos as a class. Introduce them to the idea that all animals have life cycles and they will be learning about those of sea animals at the Mote Laboratory & Aquarium.
- Have students read "The Life Cycle of a Sea Turtle," take notes and complete the worksheet. As a class, discuss what you learned and use that to start a KWL about the life cycles of other marine animals you'll meet during your visit to the Mote.





THE LIFE CYCLE OF SEA TURTLES

Turtles pass through four stages before they become **adults** and complete their life cycle: **spawning, eggs, hatching,** and **juveniles**. This process of change is called a **metamorphosis**.

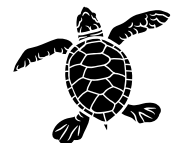
The sea turtles' life cycle begins with spawning which is when mother turtles leave the ocean to lay their eggs. The mother turtles dig holes in the sand or mud and bury 80 to 120 eggs. Burying them keeps them safe from predators.

The eggs are shaped like ovals and are a bit soft. They stay underground from spring to summer. During this time, the turtles inside are growing. The mother turtles do not check on their eggs.

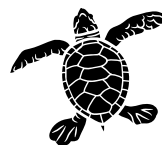
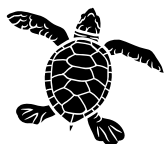
After about three months, the turtles begin to peck the eggshells so they can get out. This is the hatching stage. In warm temperatures, females come out of the eggs. In cooler temperatures, male turtles hatch. Once they come out of their eggs, the turtles have to dig themselves out of the mud or sand. After the turtles come out they are called **hatchlings!**

The next important step in a sea turtle's life is the dangerous trip it must take from the safe nest across the beach to the ocean. During this stage, the baby turtles are in danger of being eaten by predators. Their mothers are not around to protect them so the baby turtles must do everything by themselves.

Turtles are then in the juvenile stage, which lasts ten more years. The juvenile stage is sometimes called "the lost years" because it's not clear where the turtles are or what they're doing during this time. We know that they are continuing to grow and eat foods like jellyfish and fish eggs. They live in deep water.



The last stage of the life cycle is adulthood. During this stage, turtles migrate to beaches to mate. The female turtles will swim to shore to lay their eggs. The laying of eggs starts the life cycle all over again!



Name _____

Taking Notes

Directions: Use this organizer to take notes on the reading.

list of key words

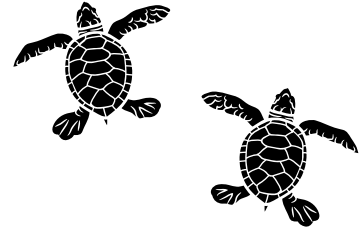
words I need to define

summary of main ideas

interesting facts

questions I have

Name _____



THE LIFE CYCLE OF SEA TURTLES

Answer these questions based on the reading. Go back to the reading whenever you need to find or confirm your answers.

What happens when mother turtles spawn?

Why are baby turtles in danger when they hatch from their eggs?

Which stage of the life cycle is also called "the lost years?"