Happy Sea Turtle Nesting Season

My how this school year has flown by! It is also hard to believe sea turtle nesting season is upon us again.

As many hatchlings are about to begin the incredible journey of their lives, there is no better time for students to learn about:

THE SEA TURTLE LIFE CYCLE!

Journey of a Sea Turtle Survival Game
Who can make it past all the obstacles of a sea turtle's life?

We recently modified one of our most popular field trip programs, Journey of a Sea Turtle, to be more interactive. As students learn about each sea turtle life stage and the associated threats, we play a game along the way. The game starts with a classroom full of student "hatchlings", but only a few will make it to the adult stage.
See the resources below for the lesson and the associated game. The only additional resource you will need to make are the letters for the game. (We typically have classes of 30 students, so we made two sets of letters A-Z).

**Materials**

**Teacher Guide**
(Photos can substitute for specimen in materials list)

**Game**

**The Incredible (Sea Turtle) Journey!**

An interactive game where students experience the unpredictable life of a sea turtle

We were inspired by Project Wet's activity called "The Incredible Journey". This original activity is an effective way to teach students about the water cycle, so we thought it would be fun to adapt it for sea turtle life cycles.
We tested this game out on our education staff, and they loved it! We will also play this game with our Sea Turtle Campers this summer. Everything you need to get started in your own classroom is below.

**Materials**

*Teacher Activity Guide*

*Labels for Cubes (print and cut)*

Please refer to the Journey of a Sea Turtle Educator Guide in the section above for background information

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**Come See Sea Turtle Life Cycles in Action!**
Summer vacation doesn't mean the learning has to stop. In fact, summer is one of the most exciting times at the GSTC. We have a variety of programs that allow you and your family to experience sea turtle nesting, research, and rehabilitation first-hand.

**Turtle Walks**

**Ride with Patrol**

**Sunrise Walks**

**Sea Turtle Summer Camp**

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**Patient Highlight - Life Stages at the GSTC**

Our current patients exhibit three different sea turtle life stages.

**Hatchling - Boomerang**

Boomerang is a loggerhead that was
found as a straggler hatchling in his/her nest last July by our Sea Turtle Patrol. This turtle has lived at our center since that day as an education ambassador. If Boomerang were in the ocean at this stage, he/she would be spending the first few years of its life hiding in sargassum seaweed, floating at the top of the water.

For this reason, Boomerang can be found often floating at the top of the tank with his/her flippers tucked up. We will release this little one when it is approximately a year old. At this life stage, the turtle will be released several miles off shore in a patch of sargassum.

**Juvenile - Manicotti**

Manicotti is a juvenile sea turtle found stranded on Cumberland Island, GA. Juvenile sea turtles spend their time closer to the shore where they can find bigger food sources for their larger size.

Green sea turtles, unlike loggerheads, are herbivorous. However, at this stage, they will still eat some seafood along with vegetation. Juvenile green sea turtles in our hospital are fed seafood pieces along with lettuce, cucumbers and green peppers.

**Sub-Adult - Trantwood**

Trantwood is a sub-adult loggerhead sea turtle that stranded in Virginia after becoming cold stunned this past winter. Sub-adult sea turtles are large animals.
(Trantwood weighs about 140 lbs). However, they are not fully mature just yet. Loggerheads don't reach reproductive maturity until around 30-35 years of age. A sea turtle at Trantwood's life stage will spend its time migrating up and down the coast in search of bigger food, such as blue crabs, horseshoe crabs, whelks, and a variety of other seafood.

For more detailed information on each life stage, please see the Journey of a Sea Turtle educator guide above!

**Kids in Action!**

Meet Kaylee, an awesome girl lending sea turtles a helping flipper. From a young age, Kaylee was interested in all wildlife, but had a special interest in turtles. She first visited the Georgia Sea Turtle Center in 2017, which inspired her to become an advocate for turtles at home. Kaylee encouraged everyone around her to recycle and save turtles from plastic.

She asked her family to adopt one of the GSTC sea turtle patients, Krakatoa, for her birthday and enjoyed email updates about her turtle for the next several months. When the time for Krakatoa's release finally arrived, Kaylee's family made sure she didn't miss the opportunity and joined Krakatoa's special VIP release!
During her VIP tour, Kaylee learned about the GSTC's need for towels and blankets. She knew just what to do! In August 2018, Kaylee had to pick an FFA project, and she chose to put together a towel/blanket drive to benefit the GSTC. She made posters to put up around her school, made a video for social media, and set a goal of collecting 50 blankets.

Within a matter of weeks, she had overflowing buckets of towels and blankets and had far surpassed her goal, exceeding 100! Family and friends had
contributed, and she had collected towels from a total of seven surrounding counties. She was overjoyed at the success and re-visited the GSTC with her family to deliver her donations.

Kaylee plans to continue spreading the word about the work of the GSTC and aspires to be a marine biologist.

Additionally, Kaylee's FFA project won in her area, and she was able to compete and present at the state level!

Way to go Kaylee!

Do you have an awesome student or class that is changing the world for turtles? To feature them in the next Kids in Action, please contact us at gstceducation@jekyllisland.com

To see a list of the many ways to help support our turtles, please visit our Support Page.
May's Book: "Where Should Turtle Be?"

**Author:** Susan Ring

**Illustrator:** Laurie Allen Klein

**Interest Level:** Lower Grades

Pre-K - 3rd

Where Should Turtle Be? features a sea turtle meeting a variety of turtle and animal species along his journey home.

**Synopsis:** A baby sea turtle emerges from his nest in the sand but, taking a wrong turn, finds himself in the woods. A friendly bear explains the life of a box turtle, but that information doesn't seem to apply to him—nor does that of a painted turtle at the pond or a terrapin in the salt marsh. Soon, improbably, transported "about a mile and a yard" by a fit of laughter, he finds himself back on the beach and makes his way to the sea. The satisfying rhythm and rhyme of the short verses make this a good choice for reading aloud. Children will sympathize with the little turtle, who listens politely to the advice of others, but follows his own heart in the end. Along the way, they'll also pick up some ideas about the habits and habitats of four types of turtles, ideas that will be reinforced and extended by the appended "Turtle Fun Facts" and two matching games.

[Click here](#) for a full list of our Scute-Approved books and an overview of our Scute-Approved Reading Program.
See you in September!

We hope you and your students have a fantastic summer. Our Teaching with Turtles Newsletter will be back in your inbox in September. Invite your teacher friends to sign up so they can also receive an entire school-year's worth of resources!

In the meantime, we invite you and your students to follow the weekly happenings at the Georgia Sea Turtle Center through the educational posts on our social media.

As always, if you would like to experience a field trip at our center, you can get started by sending us an email at gstcreervations@jekyllisland.com

See you for exciting new things in the next school year!

Thanks again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

The Georgia Sea Turtle Center
Education Department and Sea Turtle Patients