



Womble's Tale

Created by the NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher Education Section

Essential Question:

How can pollution injure sea animals?

Lesson Overview:

As a class, you will read the story of a sea turtle who was brought to the aquarium sick because he had ingested a balloon. You will discuss why sea turtles eat trash and how we can prevent other sea turtles from being injured in this way.

Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand the cause of marine debris.
- Explain why sea turtles eat marine debris.
- Provide ways to reduce marine debris to help protect sea turtles.

North Carolina Standards:

Kindergarten:

Art:

- **K.V.2** Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
 - **K.V.2.3** Create original art that does not rely on copying or tracing.
- **K.CX.2** Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts.
 - **K.CX.2.2** Identify relationships between art and concepts from other disciplines, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and other arts.
 - **K.CX.2.3** Understand that artists sometimes share materials and ideas (collaboration).

English:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.1** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is...).



First Grade:

Art:

- **1.V.2** Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
 - **1.V.2.1** Recognize that artistic problems have multiple solutions.
 - **1.V.2.3** Create art from imaginary sources of inspiration.
- **1.CX.2** Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts.
 - **1.CX.2.2** Identify connections between art and concepts from other disciplines, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and other arts.
 - **1.CX.2.3** Differentiate between sharing ideas and copying.

English:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.1** Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

Science:

- **1.L.1** Understand characteristics of various environments and behaviors of humans that enable plants and animals to survive
 - **1.L.1.3** Summarize ways that humans protect their environment and/or improve conditions for the growth of the plants and animals that live there (e.g., reuse or recycle products to avoid littering)

Social Studies:

- **1.G.2** Understand how humans and the environment interact within the local community.
 - **1.G.2.1** Explain ways people change the environment (planting trees, recycling, cutting down trees, building homes, building streets, etc.).

Second Grade:

Art:

- **2.V.2** Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
 - **2.V.2.1** Understand that artistic problems have multiple solutions.
 - **2.V.2.3** Create art from real and imaginary sources of inspiration.
- **2.CX.2** Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts.
 - **2.CX.2.2** Understand relationships between art and concepts from other disciplines, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and other arts.

Social Studies:

- **2.G.2** Understand the effects of humans interacting with their environment.
 - **2.G.2.2** Explain how people positively and negatively affect the environment.



Third Grade:

Art:

- 3.V.2 Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
 - 3.V.2.3 Create art from realistic sources of inspiration.
- 3.CX.2 Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts.
 - 3.CX.2.2 Understand how to use information learned in other disciplines, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and other arts in visual arts.

Fourth Grade:

Art:

- 4.V.2 Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
 - 4.V.2.1 Identify different successful solutions to artistic problems.
 - 4.V.2.2 Use ideas and imagery from North Carolina as sources for creating art.
- 4 CX.2 Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts.
 - 4.CX.2.2 Apply skills and concepts learned in other disciplines, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and other arts, in the visual arts.

Science:

- 4.L.2 Understand food and the benefits of vitamins, minerals and exercise.
 - 4.L.2.1 Classify substances as food or non-food items based on their ability to provide energy and materials for survival, growth and repair of the body

Fifth Grade:

Art:

- 5.V.2 Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
 - 5.V.2.2 Use ideas and imagery from the global environment as sources for creating art.
 - 5.V.2.3 Create realistic, imaginative, abstract, and non-objective art.

Social Studies:

- 5.G.1 Understand how human activity has and continues to shape the United States.
 - 5.G.1.2 Explain the positive and negative effects of human activity on the physical environment of the United States, past and present.



Time Frame:

Preparation: 5 minutes

Activity: 30 minutes

Materials:

- Womble's Tale
- Paper or poster board
- Markers
- Other craft supplies (optional)

Preparation:

Access Womble's Tale via PowerPoint or on the Sea Turtle website. Collect paper (or poster board) and markers for each student.

Supplemental Background Information for Teachers:

Marine debris is any man-made waste that ends up in the ocean. It can wash away during a storm, be left on a beach, or be thrown overboard from a ship. Once it is in the ocean it is very difficult to remove. The majority of marine debris is plastic. Plastic can stay in the ocean for an incredibly long time. It does not biodegrade like other items, such as paper. Instead, plastic photodegrades, which causes it to break down into smaller pieces of plastic. Many marine organisms, including sea turtles, are confused by marine plastic and eat it. This can cause the animal to become sick or even die.

Once plastic is in the ocean, it is very difficult to remove. The best solution is to prevent it from entering the ocean in the first place. Sea turtles often eat balloons and plastic bags, mistaking them for jellyfish. Balloons end up in the ocean when people release them, whether intentionally or unintentionally. There are several organizations, such as Balloons Blow, that work hard to increase awareness of the effects balloons have on wildlife.

Plastic bags are now being found on every continent, including Antarctica. Because they are lightweight, it is easy for them to blow out of trash cans. We encourage you to refuse plastic bags when offered and to use your own reusable bag instead. If you must use a plastic bag, we encourage you to return it to the original store, where they can recycle it into other products. Many communities are considering or have already enacted single-use plastic bag bans or charging extra for them. Every plastic bag we refuse is one less that could possibly injure wildlife.



Activity:

1. Introduce Womble's Tale by explaining that this is a true story about a real sea turtle.
2. Read Womble's Tale as a class.
3. Ask the class what happened to Womble while he was in the aquarium. How did he end up eating a balloon?
4. As a class, brainstorm ways to prevent this from happening to other turtles.
5. On their own, or in groups, have the students create a poster encouraging people to protect sea turtles by:
 - a. Not releasing balloons
 - b. Using reusable bags
 - c. Using less plastic
 - d. Picking up trash on the beach
6. Share the posters with the school or community.

Summary:

Sea turtles eat a variety of food including jellyfish, fish, and shellfish. Unfortunately, sea turtles have very small brains and are easily confused by marine debris. This can lead to sea turtles getting sick or dying. It is important that we reduce our plastic use to help keep plastics out of the ocean.

Extensions:

1. Organize a beach cleanup as a class. Pick up lots of plastic. Share your best pictures with us. You may see your class featured in our blog! You can collect data on your beach cleanup through "The Big Sweep" or even an app like "The Marine Debris Tracker". You can use this data to create a graph as a class.
2. Find ways for your class or school to use less plastic. What could be replaced with better products?
3. Write a letter to the editor or local government officials about the dangers of marine debris.
4. Many communities are considering plastic bag bans. Is yours? This might be another way to get involved as a community.