

Mantle of the Expert: Turtle Watch

<p>1: Theme</p> <p>A Polynesian island hasn't seen turtles on its shores for the past four years. The chief and other members of the community are concerned about this. A team is commissioned to research where the turtles are going and why they are no longer laying eggs on the island.</p>	<p>2: Overview of learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge: names and features of animals; classifications of sea creatures; the ocean as a habitat; the coral reef habitat; ocean food chains; human and physical geographical features of an island; map features and keys; compass directions; • Skills: classification of animals; scientific enquiry; researching using books and the internet; map-making; using atlases and globes • Understanding: how animals are affected by human actions; how people from a different culture live; how to treat animals with respect; that people may harm animals unintentionally 	<p>3: List of things that make the theme interesting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turtles • Sea creatures • Island in a different part of the world • Different cultures, heritages and ways of life • World maps and maps making • Environmental problems / cause and effect 	<p>4: Generate questions for inquiry</p> <p><i>Social, political, historical, environmental, critical, ethical, philosophical, spiritual</i></p> <p>Are we responsible for animals and creatures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can certain animals have cultural significance? • Should we put human needs above animals'? • How can heritage and tradition be preserved in the modern world? Should it? • What do animals need in order to survive and flourish?
<p>5: Invent a narrative – include tension, location and time</p> <p>Tensions: The turtles go missing in the oceans; one can't be tracked; beach closure due to litter causing danger; tourists refusing to leave the beach when requested; poachers trying to steal turtle eggs; a turtle is found to have eaten a plastic bag and is very ill; the local fisherman are determined to keep fishing using their nets that are trapping turtles – they need to earn a living.</p> <p>Time: Present day</p> <p>Location: an island in modern Polynesia</p>	<p>6: Select the expert team and list powers, responsibilities and values</p> <p>Team: Turtle Watch</p> <p>Powers: To conduct research as needed into the island and the turtles. To advise local people about their island.</p> <p>Responsibilities: To protect the turtles; to ensure people treat the turtles and their habitat with respect; to help people to understand how to help the turtles and why this is important;</p> <p>Values: To protect the turtles and their ocean; to educate others; to treat both people and turtles with dignity and respect.</p>	<p>7: Decide on the client and their role, purpose and authority</p> <p>The island chief and local elders. They need help, support and information from the team and have the power to ask the team to leave the island if they are not happy with their work.</p>	<p>8: Devise the commission</p> <p>The island Chief requires the team to visit his island to establish why turtles no longer come to lay their eggs on the beach. As part of this, the team must learn about turtles and their habitats; explore the beach and wider island; persuade the local tourism board to help out and change some of its habits; educate local people about turtles and their needs; and find ways for the local people to help.</p>
<p>9: Other points of view</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local islanders • Local children from the island • Fishermen • Tourism officer • Wildlife conservation officer • Turtles • The island 	<p>10: Possible team tasks and classroom activities</p> <p>See list below</p>	<p>11: National Curriculum Links</p> <p><i>Subject to change as the mantle develops</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science: habitats, microhabitats, food chains, animal classification, animal needs for survival • Geography: oceans, maps, human and physical features, using maps, atlases and globes, • Computing: use of map technology • Art: the work of others; using clay to create sculptures 	<p>12: Sequence of steps into the fiction</p> <p>See below</p>

Steps in:

Step 1:

Have prepared a very large piece of paper, or a plain white sheet. Invite the children to gather around it.

Step 2:

Introduce children to a fictional island through storytelling: it is a Polynesian island that was first inhabited around 1600 years ago (use a globe to place it)

Step 3:

Invite children to create the island: first by drawing the outline together on the paper, then by adding geographical features. Use photographs of Polynesian islands to support children's knowledge.

Step 4:

As children begin to complete the island, wonder aloud how people might travel to our island. Pass around pieces of paper and invite children to draw modes of transport (for example, boats, planes...)

Step 5:

Tell children the story of how the very first people travelled to the island (this is based on a Hawaiian myth). The basics: some travellers on a small boat were caught in a storm. Their boat was destroyed and they thought all was lost. Then through the waters came a huge Honu – a turtle (add a Honu symbol (see below) to the map of the island) The honu glided underneath the struggling travellers, scooped them onto its back and carried them to the nearest island: this island. From then on, the island was called Honu Island.

Step 6:

Creating the honu statue. Have available a range of items including a cushion/beanbag, fabrics etc. Invite children to gather around. Begin to talk in role as one of the travellers from the story: talk about your experience of the storm and being rescued by the Honu. At one point look up and acknowledge the children: *'You were there, weren't you? You were with me that day.'* In this way, invite them into the story. Talk about what it had been like. Explain that you are trying to make a statue of the Honu as a mark of respect to it. Invite the children to join in to create a large representation of the Honu

Step 7:

As they finish, invite the children to stand around the statue with hands held and offer their thanks to the Honu: begin, for example, by saying: *Honu, you have kindness in your heart.* Invite children to contribute. *(this could later become a short written activity)*

Step 8: (a separate session)

Outside, if possible: have turtles chalked onto an area of the playground, which has been cordoned off with tape and a sign saying 'BEACH CLOSED. AUTHORISED PERSONEL ONLY'

An adult in role is crouched down with a clip board, studying one of the turtles. Children discuss this and meet the adult, who is a marine biologist specialising in turtles. She/he has to measure, name and tag all of these turtles to find out where they are migrating to each year. She/he invites children to join her.

Step 9:

Invite children, in pairs or alone, to choose a turtle, measure it, name it and draw it on a given sheet. In this way, the children become Turtle Watch: these are the turtles they will be tracking.

Step 10:

Setting up the classroom as Turtle Watch HQ, with a world map on the wall which has small representations of the children's turtles blu-tacked on showing where they are. In addition, any other arrangements the team wants to make to set up their HQ

At a later point in the fiction, the children will meet Chief Kekepania Akana, from Honu Island. Turtles have not been seen on the island for 10 years now, and she wants to employ Turtle Watch to find out why. This is their main commission.

7 aspects of planning a start:

1. What's happening? Location, people, events?
2. What signs are there for the students to interpret – words, pictures, movement?
3. What's going to attract their interest – the tension?
4. What questions are raised – the inquiry?
5. What tasks are the students going to do to bring them into the fiction?
6. How are students going to take on the mantle of the expert team?
7. How are they going to be introduced to the client and the commission?

Possible tasks:

Commission	Fictional world: the team	Activities/purpose
To establish why turtles are no longer coming to the island	Find out about turtle habitats and why they are suited to turtles' needs	Report for the local people what turtles need
	Researching the microhabitat of a coral reef to find out whether it will provide for turtles	Educate the islanders about their coral reef
	Mapping a turtles' route to find out where turtles are going, and why.	To compare where the turtles are going with the island's beaches to identify what an ideal habitat is like
	Go to the beach and establish why it is an unsuitable habitat for the turtles to lay their eggs in	To identify steps to be taken to re-establish the beach as a suitable habitat for the turtles
To persuade local people and the tourist board to adapt to ensure the turtles will return to the island	Creating a model of the beach as it could be (models of turtles etc)	To help the tourist board to advertise the beach as desirable destination and to understand the value of having turtles back on the beach
	Creating books about turtles to educate the local children	To ensure that the local children care about turtles and their heritage
	To create tourist leaflets highlighting the ocean creatures they could see, including turtles, if the beach and ocean were cleaned up	To ensure that tourism is positively affected by our work
To educate the local people and tourists about how to ensure the turtles keep coming to the island and why this is important	To create art from collected rubbish and show others how to do	To provide an alternative use for the litter that is cleaned up from the beach
	Producing a poster to educate local people about reduce, reuse and recycle	To promote care for the turtles and other wildlife in the oceans
	To create an artefact from the island's past to educate its children about their heritage	To promote the children's pride in their story and heritage. To promote care of turtles
	To explore alternatives to plastic usage on the island	To ensure that the turtles' habitat remains clean and healthy and therefore that the turtles continue to come to the beach

