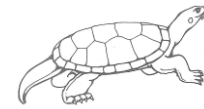


Unique Adaptations to a Unique Environment: Mary River Turtle and its Environs

LESSON EIGHT: **Are You a Turtle Expert?**



PHASE	LEARNING SEQUENCE	ACTIVITY	RESOURCES
Engage	Introduce and discuss Lesson Goals (focus Questions) Revisit KWL chart from Lesson One	Overview of Unit Fill in sections as a group Individual: My Three BIG understandings from this unit (in Science Journal)	Resource #1: ASOT goal setting
Explore	Revisit threats (Lesson Five)	In teams rank threats to the Mary River Turtle. Speaker reports back to group	Resource #2 Ranking Threats (cards printed and laminated, set per group)
Explain	This could be you: what changes in behaviour and attitude need to take place?	Scenario: <i>Tom and His Family Farm</i> . Read and reflect. Propose actions.	Resource #3 Tom and his family <i>farm</i> (dilemma scenario, worksheet per student)
Elaborate		Finalise threats ranking. Suggest actions for top three. Students demonstrate understanding of the habitat needs, current threats and suggest actions which could help guarantee the future of the Mary River Turtle.	Resource #4 Threats and Solutions (match threats and solutions)
Evaluate	Application of knowledge	Write the three recommendations for Tom to take to the Principal. Are these things we could do?	Resource #5 ASOT goal review Science Journal

ASOT Goal Setting

Today's Lesson poses the question:

Based on what we now know, what can we do to help the Mary River turtle avoid extinction in the future?



Ranking Threats

Turtles become entangled in fishing lines and hooks left by fishermen	Stainless steel fishing hooks caught in turtle's mouths
Boat-strike (motor boats propellers injuring turtles)	People don't know that sandy banks can contain turtle eggs
Rubbish is buried in gullies	People don't know we have a very rare, endangered turtle in our river
Loss of eggs to native predators especially goannas	Floods drowning nests
Cattle trampling eggs in nests when walking to drink from the river	Erosion of nesting banks
Four-wheel drive vehicles driving on nesting banks	Dogs prowling at night, digging up eggs
People taking wild baby turtles home to put in their fish tank or show their friends	Litter being washed into the river

Tom and his family farm

a dilemma scenario



Tom lives with his family on a large property on the banks of the Mary River, in south east Queensland. They have a pet cat and dog that run free all day and night. To help keep the grass down, Tom's Dad has 20 cows. When the cows are thirsty, they walk down the riverbank so they can drink from the river. Tom and his sister attend the local school. During summer, Tom and his friends often do down to the river to swim and catch fish. Sometimes his friend drops their bait bag into the water or leaves his tangled fishing line on a stick on the edge of the water.

His Aunt, Uncle and three cousins often come up from Brisbane in the holidays and camp on the farm near the riverbank. Tom likes to introduce his cousins to a friendly family of ducks which often swim near them. Occasionally they see turtles basking on logs, mullet jump or see an eagle flying over the tops of the trees. Tom's Uncle brings his jet ski and they love going for rides up and down the river to the bridge. To save taking their rubbish home, they leave all their empty bottles, tins and food packets under a log so they won't blow away.

Tom has recently been learning about the rare and endangered Mary River turtle which lives in his river. Mary River turtles are shy and elusive. When Tom's Dad was young, scientists had not yet realised this turtle was different to the other five turtles found in the Mary River.

Write in your Science Journal.

Based on your sorting of the cards earlier, what suggestions can you make for Tom and his family to help them care for the Mary River turtle and other creatures which share its habitat?

Oral Report: Share your results with your classmates, giving your reasons.

Make changes if you have reconsidered any points.

Tom's work at school on the Mary River Turtle prompted the Principal to ask you to suggest the most important three things that the school can do to help this endangered turtle.

Threats and Solutions

	Threat	Seriousness 1 = most serious 13 = least serious
A	Loss of eggs to predators	
B	Floods drowning nests	
C	Cattle trampling eggs in nests	
D	Erosion of nesting banks	
E	Four-wheel drives driving on nesting banks	
F	Dogs prowling at night	
G	Litter being washed into the river	
H	Fishing hooks and lines left by fishermen	
I	Stainless steel fishing hooks caught in turtle's mouths or throat	
J	Boat-strike (motor boat propellers injuring turtles)	
K	People don't know that sandy banks can contain turtle eggs	
L	Rubbish is buried in gullies	
M	People don't know that we have a very rare endangered turtle in our river.	

To which of the above threats could this offer a solution?



1. Keep pets inside at night	
2. Take all rubbish to the Council tip	
3. Fence cattle so they can't walk on riverbanks and provide water troughs.	
4. Become a turtle messenger and educate people about our Mary River turtle	
5. Plant more trees along river banks to hold the soil	
6. Fence nesting banks like Tiaro Landcare	

ASOT goal review

What we now know?

