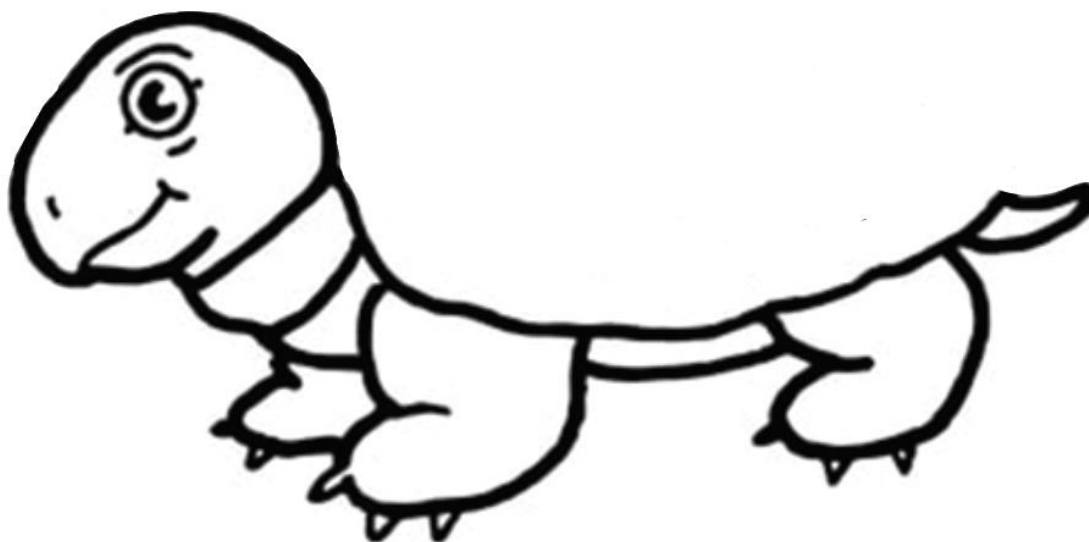





## Tortoise Activity Sheet


Grades K-2:


We learned that all tortoises live on land and have a hard shell. What other items are hard and shaped like a shell? See if you can find different items to create a shell for the tortoise below!




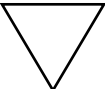
Try your hand at drawing your own tortoise using simple shapes. When you are finished, count the shapes that you made. How many of each shape did you use in your drawing?


How many squares? 

How many circles? 

How many ovals? 

How many rectangles? 

How many triangles? 

How many other shapes? 

Grades 3-5:

Jabuti, the red footed tortoise in the Buffalo Zoo's video, got his name from an Amazonian folktale about a trickster tortoise. While our Jabuti would never play a trick on his friends, he does love to explore, bask in the sunlight, and munch the grass. Can you write a funny story about our friend, Jabuti?

Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

- What do other animals think of Jabuti? How does Jabuti feel about other animals?
- Can Jabuti move around in different ways? Where would he go?
- If Jabuti were a super hero, what would be his power? Who would be his side-kick? Who would be his arch-nemesis?
- Does Jabuti have a career? What are Jabuti's goals for the future?
- How does Jabuti celebrate his birthday? Is there a special present he'd like to receive or one that he is dreading?



When you are finished, illustrate what you wrote about!

For grades 3-5:

Tortoises live in many different types of terrestrial (land) habitats all over the world. Select 2 tortoise species you want to learn more about. What type of habitat do they live in? How do their adaptations help them survive in that area? Can you create a FOOD CHAIN for each of your tortoises? Remember, energy for a food chain starts with the sun which gives energy to a plant which gives energy to an animal (when it gets eaten) who gives energy to another animal (when it gets eaten) and so on. Put on a play and act out what happens in a food chain.

For grades 6-12:

A scientist who studies reptiles is called a Herpetologist, and there are many who focus specifically on turtles and tortoises in the wild. Do some research to find current studies being conducted on wild turtles and/or tortoises. What are the researchers hoping to learn? How are they collecting their data? Why is their research important? If you were to design your own scientific study, what would you want to investigate? You can use the template below to create a hypothetical research project.

**Title:** An attention-grabbing title that draws the reader in.

**Abstract:** A brief summary of what you wanted to learn, your methods for gathering data, your outcome, the significance of your study on a larger scale, and further questions or next steps.

**Introduction:** Explains the background for your research, what you are hoping to learn, and lead in to the next section.

**Methods:** Detailed description of how you collected your data. Give enough details so that someone could replicate your methods exactly as you did. Can include pictures.

**Results:** Report the data you collected. May include tables, pictures, charts or graphs if appropriate.

**Discussion:** The analysis of your data and how it ties back in to your introduction.

**Conclusion:** How your research contributes to the global understanding of this topic and why it is significant.

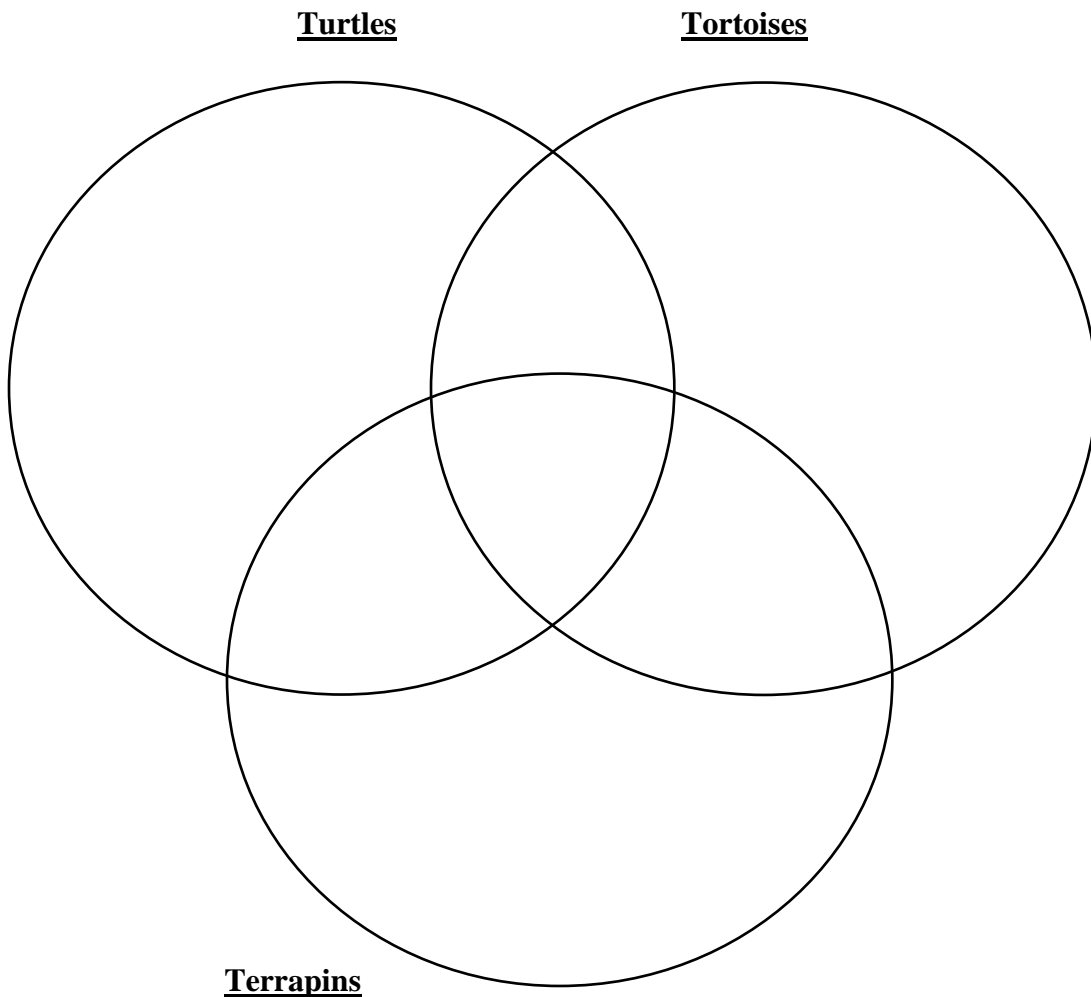
**Reference list:** A list of other research papers you consulted while researching your topic. Can be formatted in APA or MLA style depending on what discipline you are writing about.

All Grades:

In the Buffalo Zoo's videos, we talked about VENN DIAGRAMS and how they can be used to compare and contrast different things.

**Students:** Create your own Venn diagram for turtles and tortoises. If you're up for a challenge, complete the third circle for Terrapins! Then, do some research and learn more about 2 different turtles and 2 different tortoises! Talk or write about your 4 species.

**Parents/Teachers:** See the study guides at the end for sample answers.



### **BONUS Family activity!**

Believe it or not, there is a species of tortoise called the Pancake Tortoise! Their shells are pretty flat and colored tan, brown, and yellow to camouflage in the rocky desert habitat where they live. Sounds just like a pancake, right?! For this activity, have a friendly competition to see who can make the best pancake tortoise out of pancakes! There are tons of videos and tutorials online for how to make pancake art, so get creative. The best part will be devouring all of your tasty creations!

### **Venn Diagram Answer Guide**

If you want to read further, check out this website:

<https://africageographic.com/blog/whats-the-difference-between-turtles-tortoises-and-terrapins/>

#### **Turtles:**

- True sea turtles
- Live exclusively in the ocean – only females return to land to briefly lay eggs
- Feet are flipper-like for swimming
- Eat ocean-dwelling foods
- Smooth, streamlined shell
- Very large
- 7 species, all endangered

#### **Tortoises:**

- Live exclusively on land
- Wide range of habitats – desert, semi-arid, rainforest
- Feet are stocky and chunky with claws designed for walking and digging
- Eat mostly plants
- High domed shell
- Size ranges from small to very large
- Over 60 species

#### **Terrapins:**

- Spend time on land and in water
- Any habitat with access to permanent bodies of freshwater
- Feet can have webbed toes with claws for swimming and digging
- Eat both plants and animals
- Slightly domed, smooth shell
- Size is mostly small to medium
- Over 120 species

#### **All 3:**

Vertebrates (have backbone)  
Breathe air with lungs  
Long lifespan  
Beak for a mouth  
4 legs, head, tail  
Lay eggs  
Shells