

# GREEN SEA TURTLE

## *Natal Homing Activity - Expert*

Sea turtles return to the same beach they were born on when they reproduce. Scientists call this **natal homing**.

Some green sea turtles migrate more than 1,500 miles across the open ocean to reach their natal beach. To travel that far in a car, you would need to drive nearly 25 hours nonstop. Unlike us, green sea turtles make these long trips without a map. Instead, it's like they have a compass in their head.

In this challenge, you will work in groups of 2-3 and pretend you are green sea turtles returning to your natal beach. Answer the pre-activity questions on page 2, complete the activity, then answer the follow-up questions on page 3.

### **Materials:**

Large, open room (no stairs)  
Blindfold  
Stopwatch  
Pen/pencil (for expert version)

### **Instructions:**

1. Get in groups of 2-3. Take turns completing the instructions.
2. Select an area of the room that will be your natal beach.
3. Place a blindfold over your eyes.
4. Slowly and carefully, explore the room for 1 to 2 minutes. Imagine you are a sea turtle exploring the ocean.
5. Once the timer goes off, take 30 seconds to find your way back to your natal beach. Keep your blindfold on.
6. After 30 seconds, remove your blindfold to see where you ended up!
7. Complete the worksheets below to describe your experience.

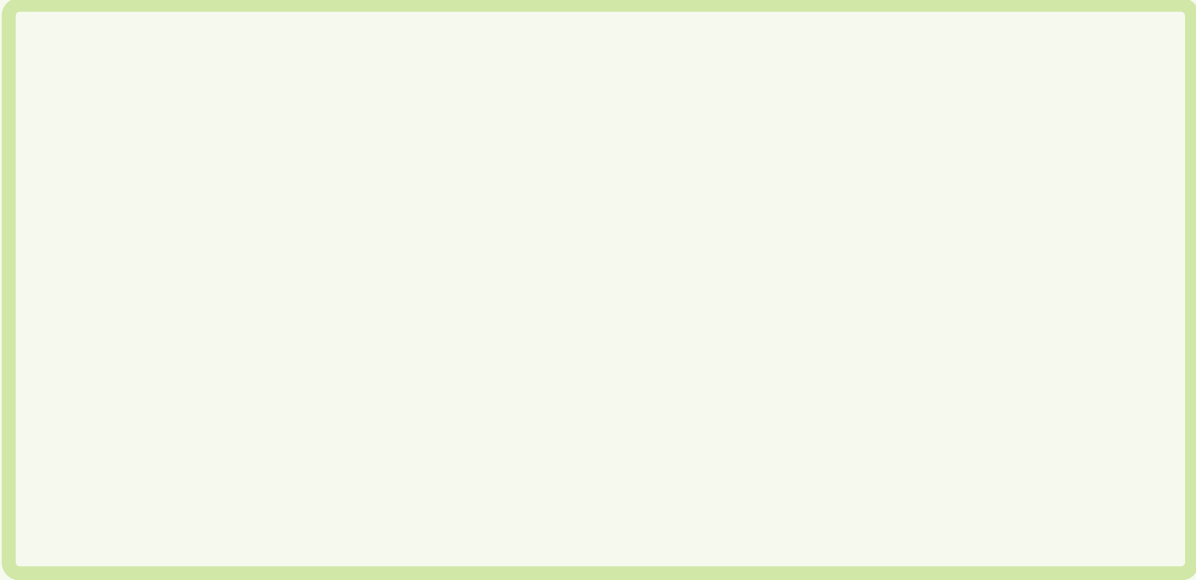
*\*Other group members must keep an eye on the exploring player to ensure they are safe.*

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## *Pre-Activity Worksheet*

### Draw Your Ideal Natal Beach

*Be sure to include the elements that make it a good beach for nesting.*



Why is it challenging for sea turtles to find their natal beach?

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Which sense will help you most while blindfolded. Why?

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## *Follow-Up Worksheet*

1. Did you successfully return to your natal beach? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the most challenging part of finding your natal beach?

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3. What senses or strategies did you use to find your way?

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4. What senses would a sea turtle use to find its way?

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5. How was your experience similar to a sea turtle finding its natal beach?

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6. How was your experience different from a sea turtle finding its natal beach?

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