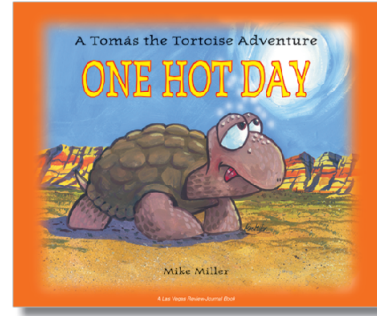


Teaching Guide

One Hot Day

A Tomás the Tortoise Adventure



Synopsis

One Hot Day by Mike Miller is a tale of a desert tortoise named Tomás who lives in a burrow in Red Rock Canyon. The hot summer heat in Southern Nevada prompts Tomás to take a journey across Nevada in search of Lake Mead where he might cool off for a bit. Along the way, Tomás is joined by other desert inhabitants – Chacko Coyote, Luis the Lizard, Rapido Roadrunner, and Chico the Centipede.

Themes

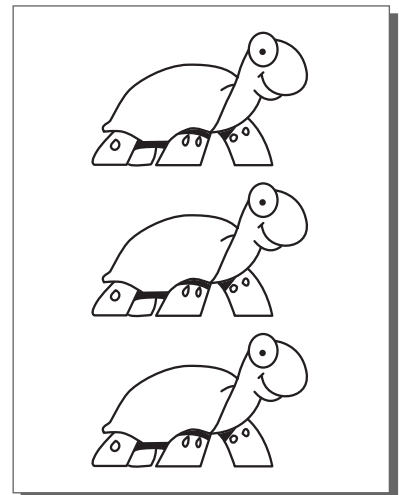
Use *One Hot Day* to introduce a unit on desert living, habitat, and/or geology.

Bulletin Board

Begin your desert thematic unit with a class discussion about the desert.

1. Create a Desert KWL chart by dividing the bulletin board into three sections. Label the first section: What We Know About the Desert; the second: What We Wonder About the Desert; and the third: What We Learned About the Desert.
2. Make several copies of the Desert Tortoise worksheet included in this guide. Have students color some yellow, some green, and some orange.
3. After reading one of the Tomás stories, ask students to brainstorm facts that they already know about the desert like “Deserts are very warm,” or “Cactus grow in the desert.” Record one fact on each yellow tortoise and attach them to the first section of the bulletin board.
4. Next, discuss what students wonder about the desert like “What plants grow in the desert?” or “How do desert animals stay cool?” Record questions on the green tortoises and attach them to the second section of the bulletin board.
5. As the questions from the green tortoises are answered throughout the unit, record new facts on the remaining orange tortoises and attach them to the final section of the bulletin board.

Extension Activity: Type unanswered questions on a take home sheet for students to discuss with parents.



One Hot Day Worksheet #1

Language Arts Activities

Story Sequencing

Create a story sequence of the events from one *One Hot Day*.

1. After reading the story one time, have students brainstorm a list of events from the story such as “Tomás leaves for Lake Mead” and “Rapido Roadrunner joins the group.”
2. Write each event on a sentence strip.
3. Have students sequence the strips in the order of which they occurred in the story.
4. Re-read *One Hot Day* to check the sequence chart. If important events are missing, write them on strips and include them on the chart. Make any adjustments necessary.

Extension Activity: Pass out sentence strips to students or groups of students for large classes. Have students illustrate the event for a class book.

Characteristics

Define the characteristics of each of the animals in *One Hot Day* using descriptive adjectives.

1. As a class, identify each character in the story *One Hot Day*. Write their names on a poster board or chalkboard.
2. Create a list of adjectives that describe each character and list them below the character’s name. For example: Tomás – curious, friendly, careful, etc.
3. Play a game of “Who Am I?” Covering the board, begin to list the characteristics for one of the characters. Have the students guess which character you are.

Extension Activity: Assign each student a character and one of the adjectives used to describe him. Have them illustrate the character with the assigned adjective.

My Adventure

Using the reproducible worksheet included in this guide, have students write a letter to a parent, friend, or teacher about a journey they recently went on. Have them include someone they met and what they did when they arrived at their destination.

A _____ Adventure
(STUDENT'S NAME)

Dear _____,
(NAME OF RECIPIENT)

I have just been on a wonderful journey. I left my home and went to _____. Along the way I met _____.
(PLACE) (PEOPLE OR ANIMALS MET ALONG JOURNEY) My favorite part of the journey was when _____.
(EVENTS)

When I arrived at _____
(PLACE)

I enjoyed _____.
(EVENTS)

Sincerely,

(STUDENT'S NAME)

One Hot Day Worksheet #2

Critical Thinking Activities

Pre-reading

Ask students to name some animals they have seen in the desert or around their home. Tell students that *One Hot Day* was written about animals and places in Nevada. Let them guess which animals or places might be included in the story.

Reading

Here are some questions to ask students while reading or after reading the story.

- What kind of home does Tomás live in?
- Why did Tomás want to visit Lake Mead?
- Do you think he will find Lake Mead without a map? What clues could he look for to find his way?
- How does a Desert Tortoise protect itself from danger?
- Would a Desert Tortoise, Coyote, Lizard or a Roadrunner want to live in a city like Las Vegas? Why or why not?
- Why do dry creek beds flood in heavy rainstorms?
- What does a dam do?
- Where does lake water come from?

Post-reading

In a classroom discussion, brainstorm another adventure for Tomás. Pick a starting point and a place for Tomás to travel to. Discuss what obstacles he might have to overcome. What animals, insects, or plants will he meet along the journey?

Art Ideas

Sand Painting

Students use a mixture of Tempura paint and play sand to create textured desert drawings.

1. In plastic or Styrofoam cups mix one part sand to one part Tempura paint. Mix several desert colors such as brown, yellow, orange, and green.
2. Use paint to make a classroom mural of the desert or individual desert landscapes.

Sand-Art Jars

Students create jars filled with colored sand.

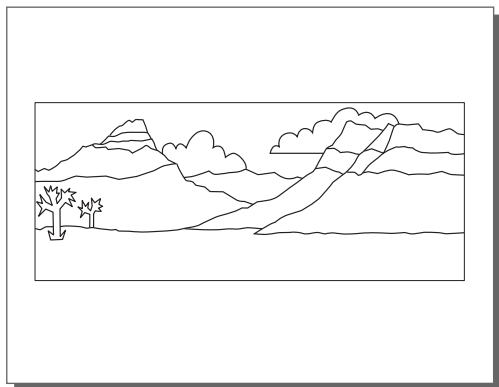
1. Cover work area with paper or plastic. Place cups or small bowls on paper – enough for each color of sand desired.
2. Fill each cup or bowl two-thirds full with play sand.
3. Add 10 to 12 drops of food coloring to sand and mix well with plastic spoon.
4. Let sand dry before using (approximately 2 hours).
5. Using plastic spoons, let students spoon sand into baby food jars. Alternate colors and fill jar to top.
6. Next, take toothpicks or coffee stirrers and push sand alongside jar from inside to create designs.
7. When done, fill jar to very top and put lid on tight.

Desert Landscape Diorama

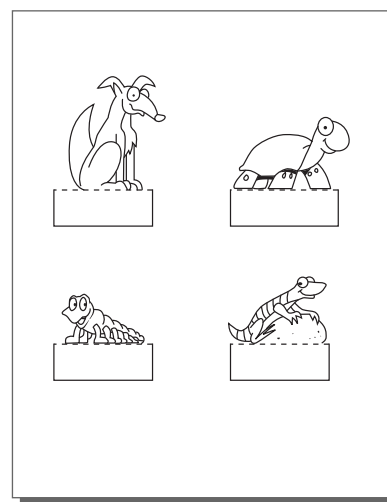
Students create their own desert diorama to take home.

1. Using the reproducible Desert Landscape, worksheets, have students cut and color the pieces of the desert and the characters from *One Hot Day*.
2. Next, have students glue the desert landscape to the inside bottom of a shoebox and place the shoebox on its side.
3. Then fold and glue the desert characters to the inside side of the box.

Variation: Use the pieces from this project in the Sand-Dunes project.



One Hot Day Worksheet #3



One Hot Day Worksheet #4

Geology

Sand Dunes

Students discuss the creation of sand dunes and then create their own in a mini-desert.

Background Information: Three elements are necessary to create sand-dunes. The first is an abundant supply of loose sand, commonly found in deserts. The second is a wind energy source strong enough to move sand. And the third element needed to create a sand dune is an object such as a boulder, tree, or shrub that obstructs the wind force causing sand to pile up in drifts.

1. Each student will need a container filled halfway with play sand. Restaurant take-home Styrofoam cartons work great.
2. Gently shake the mini-desert until the sand surface is smooth.
3. Using a drinking straw, create patterns in the sand by blowing through the straw toward the sand from different directions.
4. Next, place a medium sized rock somewhere in the mini-desert and begin to blow from one side of the rock toward the rock. A sand dune should form on the other side of the rock.

Extension Activity: Have students transfer their sand dunes to paper using pencil or chalks.

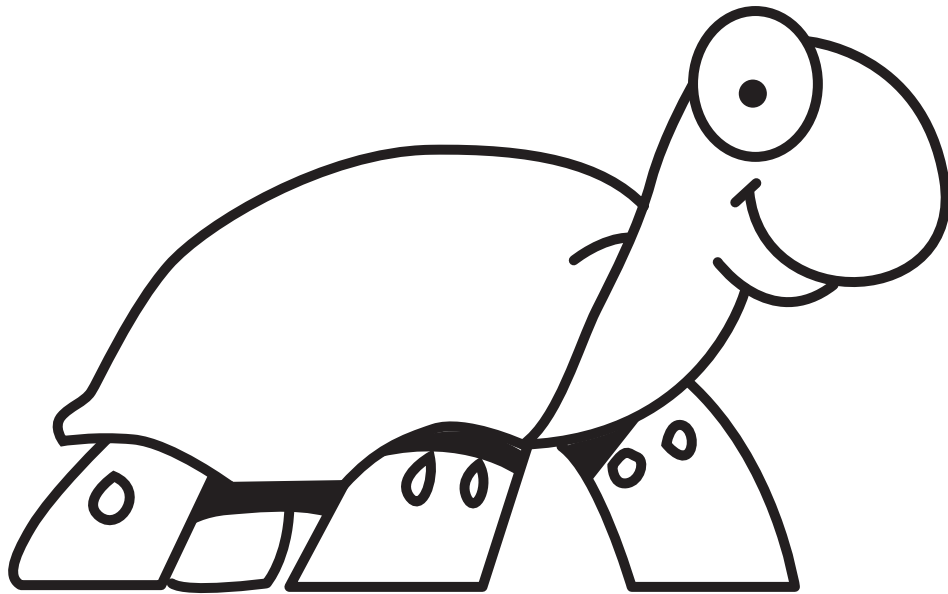
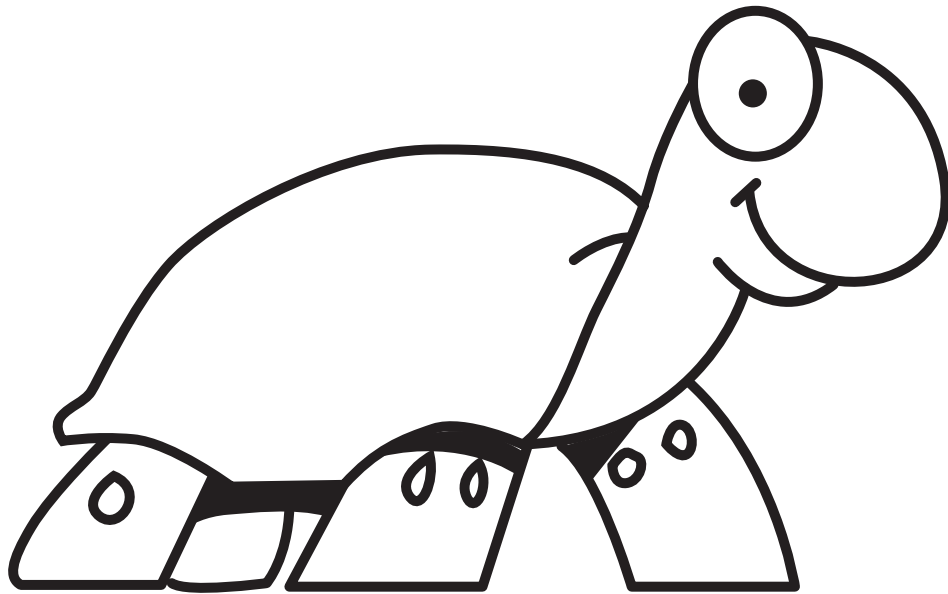
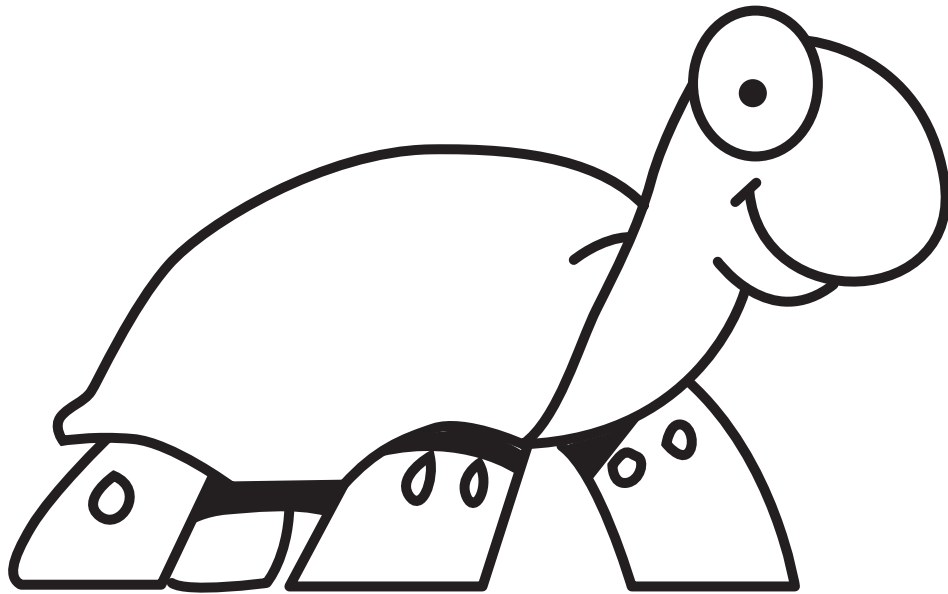
Geography

Mapping Tomás' Journey

Students will enjoy making maps of Tomás's journey to Lake Mead from *One Hot Day*.

1. Read or re-read *One Hot Day* to students.
2. Have students brainstorm a list of places from the story such as Red Rock Canyon or the wide, busy road.
3. Give each student a large piece of white paper (11"x17" works well).
4. Have each student draw a map of Tomás' journey to Lake Mead from the canyon based on their own interpretation of the story. Instruct them to include all of the places listed from the classroom discussion. Note: For younger students, it might be helpful to show them sample maps first.

Extension Activity: As a class, create a legend showing terrain, rivers, and rocks. Have students implement symbols from the legend into their maps.



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Sincerely,

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