

When Turtle Grew Feathers: A Tale from the Choctaw Nation

Retold by Tim Tingle
Illustrated by Stacey Schuett

Outcome:

Students will explore the proverb, “Don’t judge a book by its cover,” as it relates to the story.

About the Book:

Guided Reading:

M

Lexile Level:

590L

Character Traits:

Caring

Respect

Resourcefulness

Region:

USA, Native American

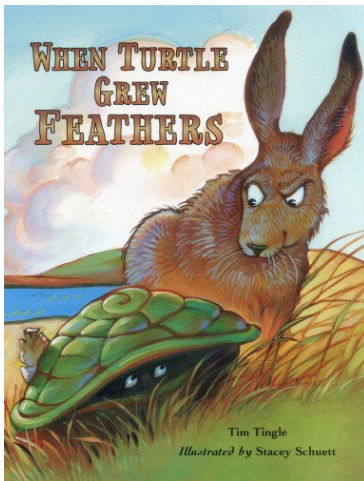
ISBN:

978-0-8748-3777-3

978-1-9391-6021-8

Materials:

- Paper, pencils
- Markers
- “Shape Poem” worksheet
- “Antonym Game Words” list
- Index cards
- Stopwatch
- (Optional): “**The Dancing Wolves**” from *Tales of Tricksters* by Pleasant DeSpain; “**Turkey Lake**” from *Stories to Play With* by Hiroko Fujita; “**Dancing to the River**” from *Sing Me a Story* by Grace Hallworth; “**Turtle Returns a Favor**” from *Through the Grapevine* by Martha Hamilton and Mitch Weiss; **Conejito** by Margaret Read MacDonald



When Turtle Grew Feathers

First Grade

Instructional Plan

Introduction

Directions:

- Ask students what a **proverb** is (a popular saying, expressing a truth or fact, used as a way of giving advice to younger generations).
- What does “Don’t judge a book by its cover” mean?
- Ask students to relate the proverb to their life experiences.
- Students draw pictures illustrating the proverb.

Teacher Reads the Story

Directions:

- Tell students that they will listen to a story where a character learned that he should not “judge a book by its cover.”
- Tell students to listen carefully so they will be able to explain the proverb as it relates to the story.

Common Core

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1

Ask and answer questions about details

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3

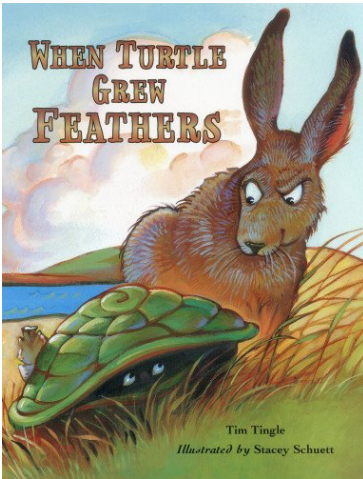
Describe characters, settings, and events

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2

Retell stories and demonstrate understanding of lesson

Questions for Assessing Students’ Comprehension:

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What is the setting of the story?
- Why didn’t Turkey see Turtle in the grass?
- What happened when Turkey stepped on Turtle?
- What did Turkey say when Turtle told him that he had broken his shell? Why was Turtle upset about his shell being broken?
- What did Turtle say to Turkey when he would not take the blame for breaking his shell?
- How did the ants help Turtle?
- What did Turtle say when Turkey complimented his shell?
- Why were the five Little Bitty Turtles running?
- What did Turtle say when Rabbit asked if he wanted to race?
- Where was the race?
- How did Rabbit feel when he saw Turkey’s neck stretch out of the shell?
- How far had Rabbit gone when Turkey finished circling the lake?
- What did Rabbit say after the race?



When Turtle Grew Feathers

First Grade

Questions for Interpretation:

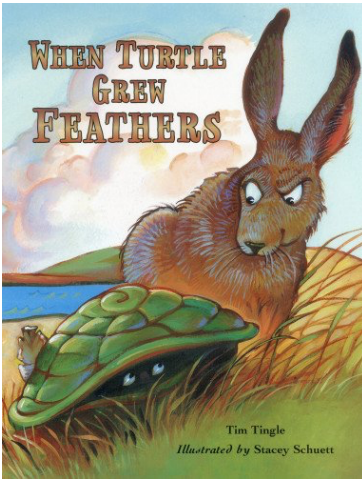
- Why is the story called, *When Turtle Grew Feathers*?
- How did Turtle grow feathers?
- When you first heard the title of the story, what did you think it would be about?
- Why did Turtle say that his shell “shattered like glass”?
- Why do you think Turtle was nice to Turkey even though Turkey was not nice to him?
- Did the other animals like Rabbit? Why or why not?
- Why was Rabbit unable to speak after Turtle won the race?
- When Rabbit lost the race before he even had a chance to start, his eyes were “as big as Little Bitty Turtle shell.” What does that mean?
- What did Rabbit think would happen in his race with Turtle?
- What animals do you think a rabbit could win a race with?
- What animals are faster than a rabbit?
- Why did Rabbit never challenge Turtle again?
- Do you think he challenged other animals? If so, which ones?
- What lesson did Turtle learn? Turkey? Rabbit?
- How does the proverb, “Don’t judge a book by its cover,” relate to the story?
- How do the pictures help tell the story?

Follow Up Activities:

Draw a Poster

Directions:

- Students each draw a poster advertising the race between the turtle and the rabbit.
- Posters should include: who, what, when and where.



When Turtle Grew Feathers

First Grade

Follow Up Activities:

Point of View

Directions:

- Divide the class into six groups.
- Teacher informs students that each group will tell the story from a different point of view: Turtle, Rabbit, Turkey, ants, Little Bitty Turtles, or an impartial bystander.
- Each group presents their version of the story.
- Teacher leads a discussion about how and why each character told the story from a different point of view.

“Shape Poem” Worksheet

Direction:

- Lead a discussion about the adjectives (words that describe a noun) that describe each animal in the story.
- Students brainstorm words to describe each animal that aren't used in the story. Record these words on the board.
- Students fill in each animal shape on the worksheet with some of these descriptive words about that animal, to create a shape poem. Read poems to the class.

“Antonym Game Words” List

Directions:

- Tell students a rabbit is **fast**, and a turtle is **slow**. Fast and slow are opposites.
- Teacher writes the list of words from the story on the board: day, long, beautiful, yell, right, friend, new, shiny, out, front, open, in, little, on, go, big, best, never
- Teacher asks students to read each word and provide an opposite. Ask students to name other pairs of opposites.
- Teacher writes the words from the “Antonym Game List” on index cards (one word per card).
- Students sit in a circle.
- Teacher places one index card face down in front of each student; wait before looking at the word.
- Teacher tells students to each turn over the card, read it, and find the student who has the opposite word on his/her card.
- When students find their match, sit together in the circle.
- Each pair tells the class their opposite words and then chooses another student to use those words in a sentence.

Common Core

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.RL.1.6

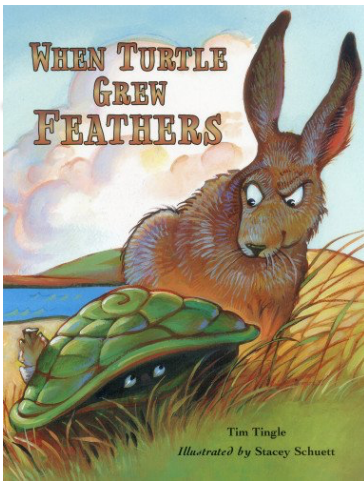
Identify the narrator at various points

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.RL.1.10

Read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.L.1.2.D

Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns



When Turtle Grew Feathers

First Grade

Follow Up Activities:

Math Activity

Directions:

- Inform students that turtles are known for being slow in their movements. They even take slow, deep breaths. One deep breath can last a turtle for several hours.
- Ask students, "How many times do you breath in one hour?"
- Tell students that they will be timed for one minute.
- Tell students to breath normally and make a tally mark on their paper each time they breathe.
- Students report how many breaths they took in one minute.
- Teacher creates a bar graph of results on the board.
- Students analyze the graph and determine which number represents the number of breaths that most of the class took during the timed segment.
- Teacher shows class (through the use of tally marks or items) how many breaths they might take in one hour.

Compare and Contrast

Directions:

- Read, "The Dancing Wolves" on page 41 of *Tales of Tricksters* (Pleasant DeSpain). This Native American folktale is about a trickster rabbit who uses his wits to escape seven hungry wolves. Compare and contrast to *When Turtle Grew Feathers*. How are the rabbit characters alike and different?
- Read, "Turtle Returns a Favor" on page 82 of *Through the Grapevine* (Martha Hamilton, Mitch Weiss). Turtle was tricked out of a meal by a spider, but Turtle figures out how to give spider a taste of his own medicine. Compare and contrast to *When Turtle Grew Feathers*. How are the turtle characters alike and different?
- Read *Conejito* (Margaret Read MacDonald). This tale from Panama tells of a clever young rabbit who uses his wits to escape danger. Compare and contrast to *When Turtle Grew Feathers*. How are the rabbit characters alike and different?
- Read, "Dancing to the River" on page 8 of *Sing Me a Story* (Grace Hallworth). This is a tale about a clever turtle who dances her way out of trouble. Compare and contrast to *When Turtle Grew Feathers*.

Common Core

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.W.1.7

Participate in shared research and writing projects

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.SL.1.5

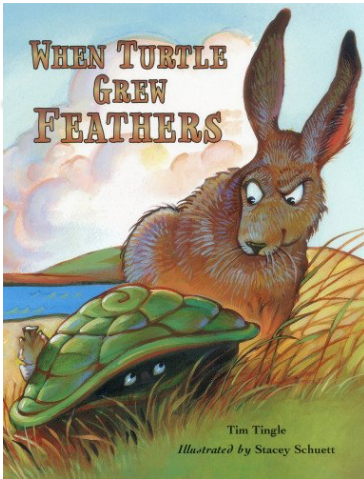
Add visual displays to descriptions

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.RL.1.5

Explain difference between books

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.RL.1.9

Compare and contrast



When Turtle Grew Feathers

First Grade

Follow Up Activities:

Story Drawing

Directions:

- Refer to the activity, "Turkey Lake" on page 38 of *Story to Play With* (Hiroko Fujita).
- This is an interactive story: Teacher reading the story offers students a description of what to draw. Teacher draws on the board while students draw on a sheet of paper. Students add more to the drawing with each description.

Common Core

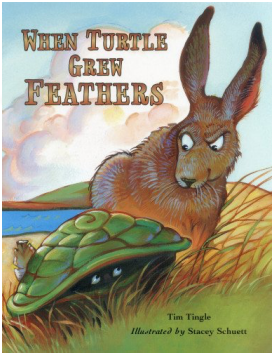
Standards:

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.SL.1.5

Add visual displays to
descriptions

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.RL.1.9

Compare and contrast



When Turtle Grew Feathers

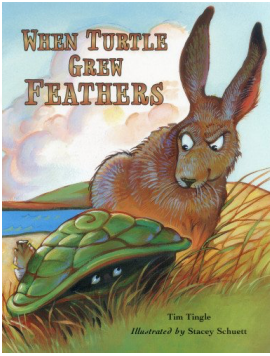
First Grade

Name _____

Date _____

Shape Poem





When Turtle Grew Feathers

First Grade

Name _____

Date _____

Antonym Game Words

little

big

yes

no

all

none

work

play

boy

girl

easy

hard

cold

hot

happy

sad

come

go

hard

soft

push

pull

kind

mean

she

he

long

short

take

give

new

old

up

down

on

off

wet

dry

out

in