



THE STORY OF A FAMOUS TORTOISE: LONESOME GEORGE LESSON PLAN

Familiarise your students with the story of Lonesome George, the famous Galapagos giant tortoise, and why he became famous worldwide. Students will learn about the factors that led to him becoming the only sub-species of his kind and why he became a conservation icon for the Galapagos Islands.

Resources required: PowerPoint presentation with guidance notes, 'The story of Lonesome George and why he was a lonesome tortoise' additional worksheet, access to the internet

1. FIRE STARTER

Introduce students to the idea of conservation and what it means to them using the first slide of the PowerPoint [presentation](#).

2. GAINING GROUND

Work through the rest of the presentation, discovering how the populations of tortoises on the islands were plundered during the era of Piracy and Whaling, and the devastating effects of invasive species. Whilst watching the animated cartoon story from the BBC and footage of David Attenborough on the islands encourage students to make notes for later use.

3. MAKING WAVES

Use the prompt questions on Slide 5 to discuss thoughts and opinions on the decimation of tortoise populations due to human activity. Discuss recent discoveries of tortoises on Isabela and how perhaps there is hope that tortoises with Pinta ancestry still exist in the wild. Students to design and write their own storyboard telling the story of Lonesome George.

4. FUTURE FOCUS

Use the additional '[The story of Lonesome George and why he was a lonesome tortoise](#)' text for a guided reading session or class review of the lesson.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Science: recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things.

- To understand the term conservation.
- Explore the history of Lonesome George and tortoises on the island of Pinta.
- To understand why he became a conservation icon for the Galapagos Islands.

STUDENTS' OUTCOMES

- To explain the term conservation and its importance.
- To explain why the exploitation of tortoises lead to Lonesome George being the only one of his sub-species left.
- To explain his importance to the field of conservation.

KEY VOCABULARY

conservation, population, decline, threat, extinct.