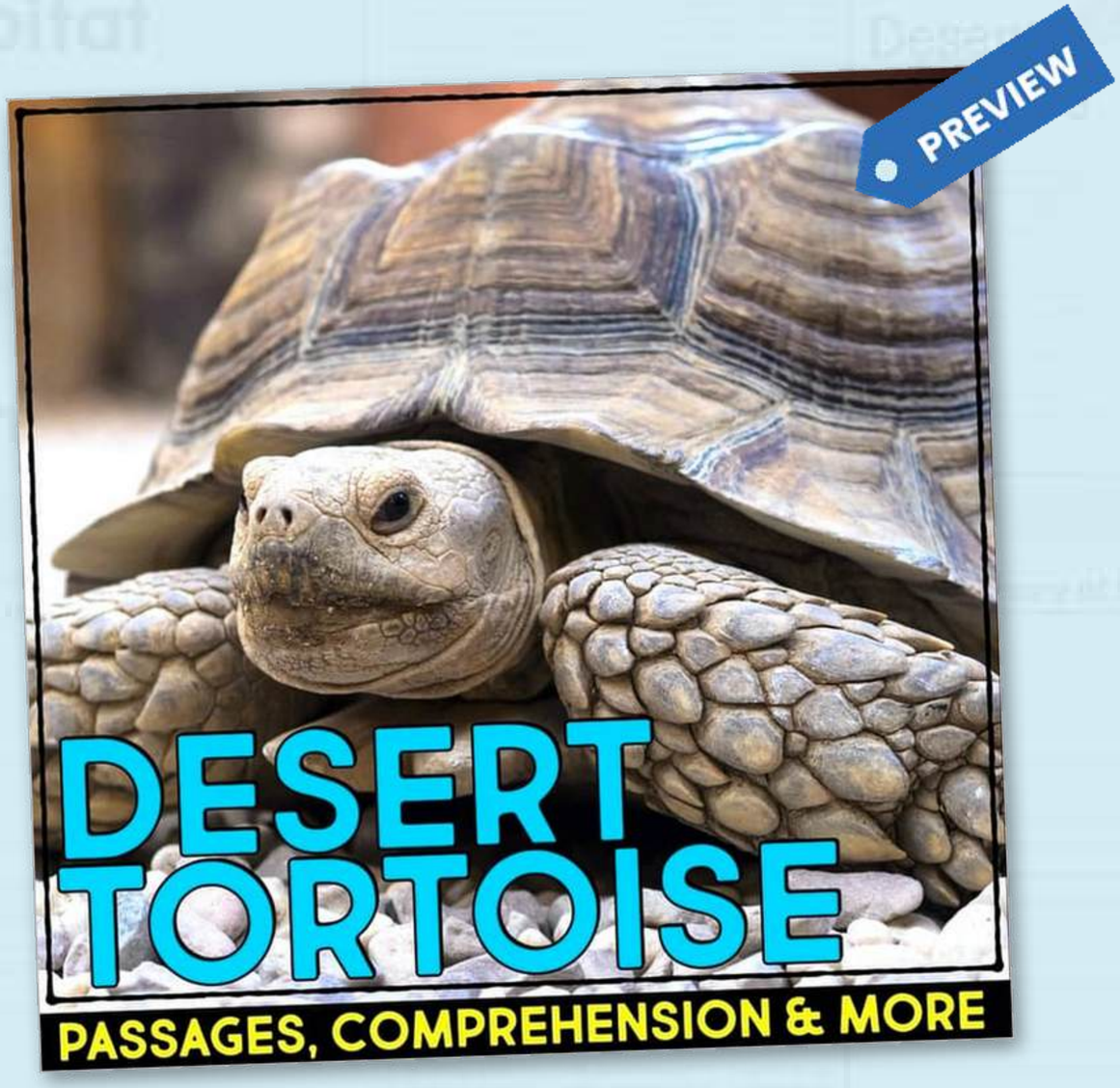
GRADES
2-3



READ, RESEARCH, AND WRITE

DESERT TORTOISE

ANIMAL RESEARCH

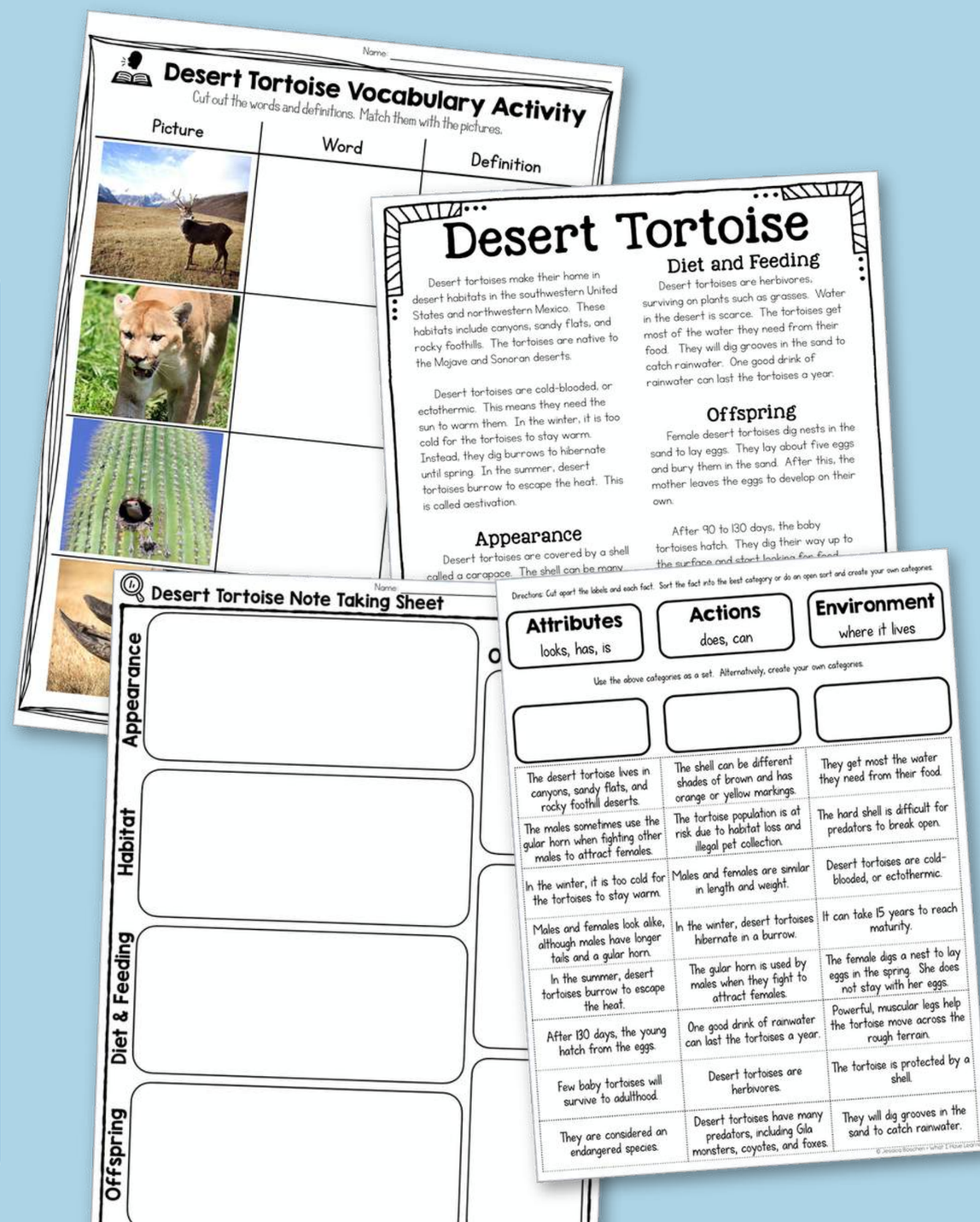
Informational Articles, Activities, and Writing

KEEP SCROLLING TO SEE WHAT'S INSIDE!

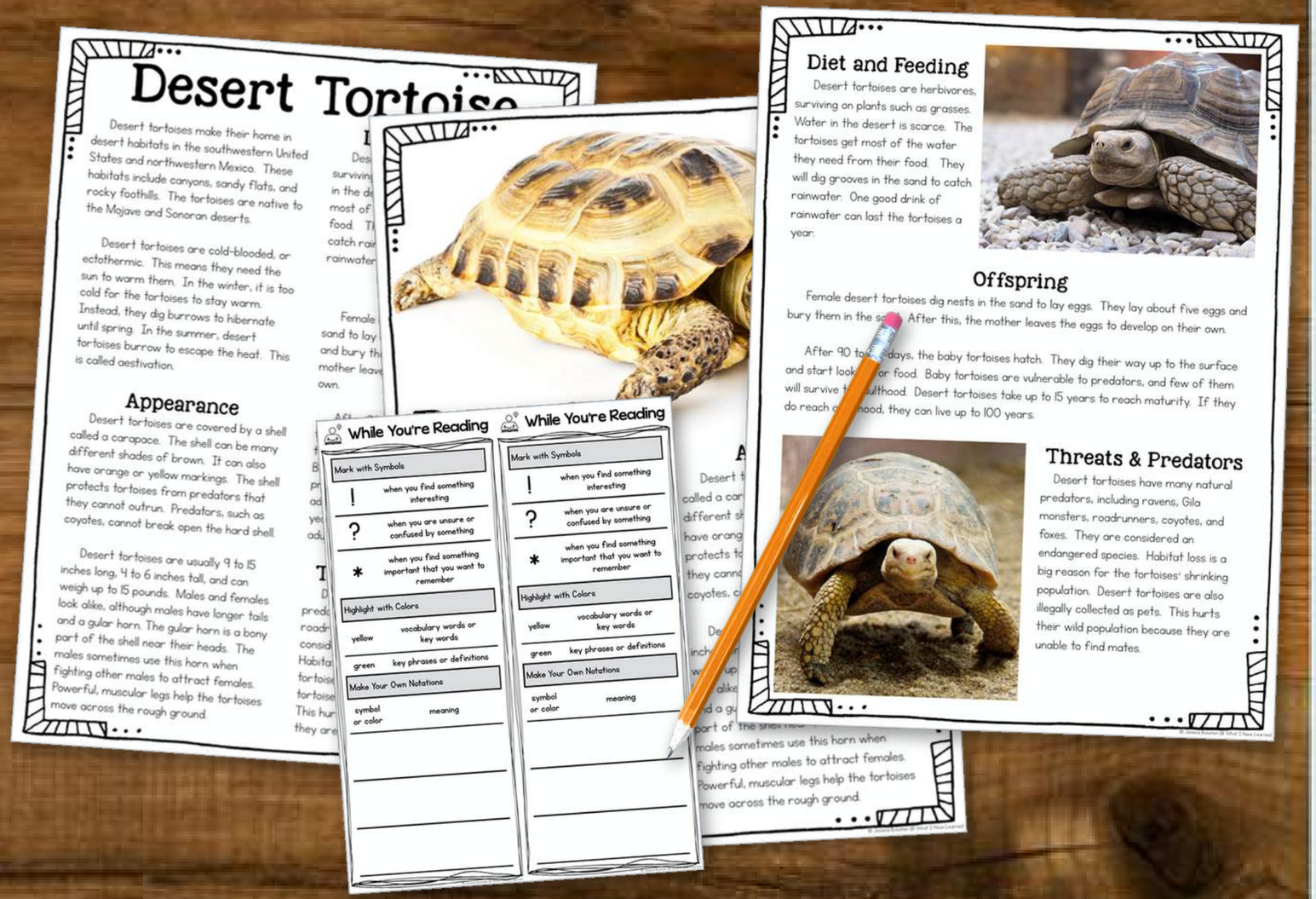
WHAT'S INCLUDED

Read, research, and write

- 1-page and 2-page informational articles
- Vocabulary cards and cut-and-paste activities
- Note-taking organizers and comprehension questions
- Fact sort activities
- Informational writing pages
- Answer keys included
- QR codes for safe video research



READ



Article comes in two formats.

Meet an animal in its habitat

1 ARTICLE

Students read a clear informational article about desert tortoise.

2 NOTICE DETAILS

Students look for facts about the desert tortoise's appearance, habitat, diet, and behavior.

3 DIFFERENT FORMATS

Teachers choose the article format that fits students' reading needs.

RESEARCH



Research pages make independent fact gathering manageable

Gather facts about desert tortoise

1 WATCH AND RESEARCH

Students use one QR-code page to find a safe video source for research about desert tortoise.

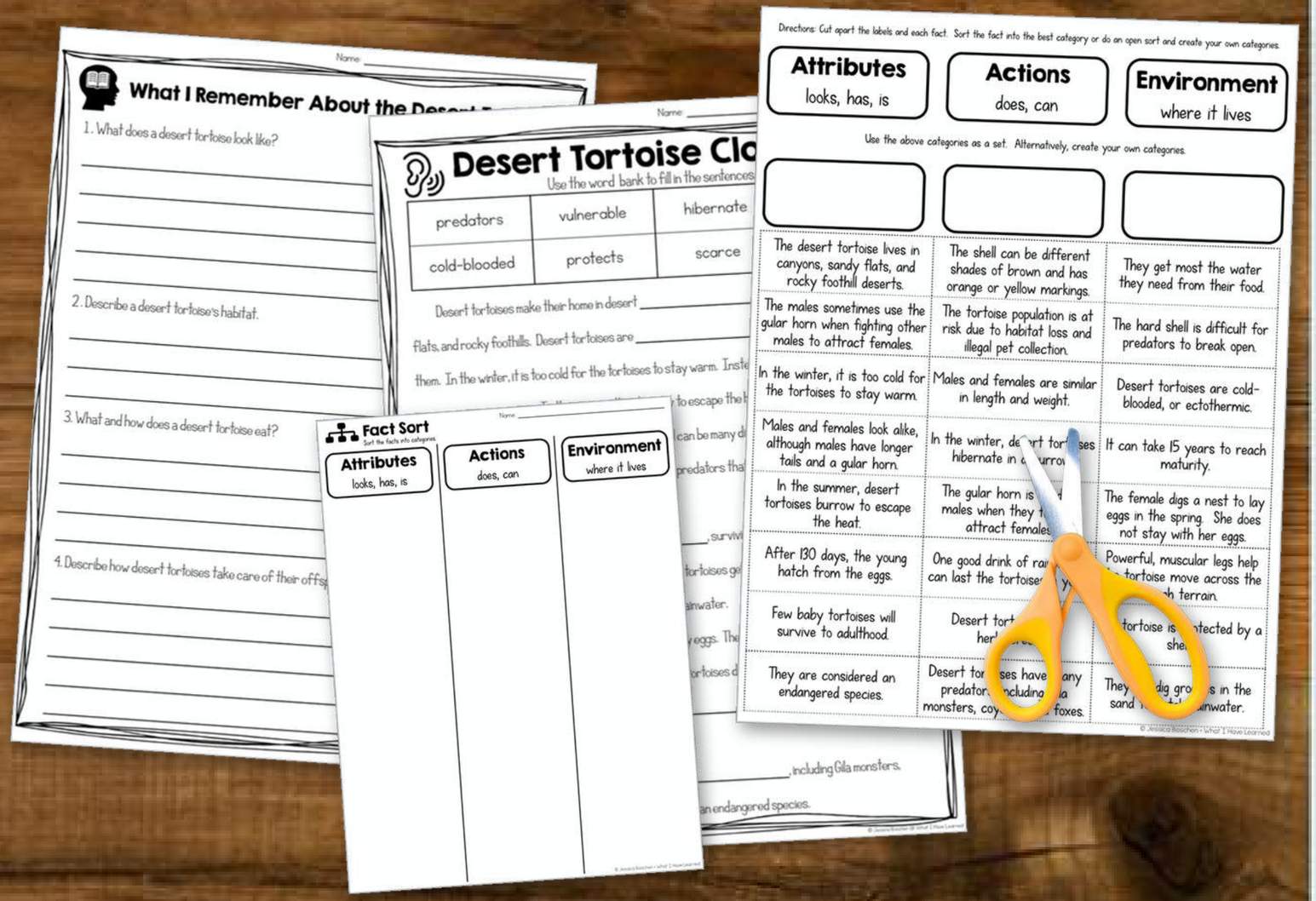
2 TAKE NOTES

Students record facts about the desert tortoise's body, habitat, behavior, and life cycle.

3 BUILD VOCABULARY

Students use picture cards and activities to practice important animal words.

ORGANIZE



Comprehension and sorting pages prepare students to write

Sort facts about desert tortoise

1 REMEMBER

Students recall important facts after reading about desert tortoise.

2 CHECK UNDERSTANDING

Students complete a cloze activity using key vocabulary and facts.

3 SORT FACTS

Students organize information into clear categories before writing.

WRITE



From organized notes to a finished informational report

Turn notes into an desert tortoise report

1 PLAN

Students use note-taking pages to collect and organize research.

2 SUMMARIZE

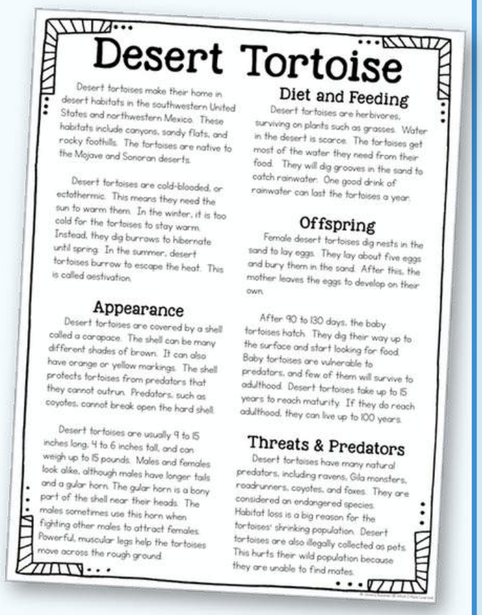
Students turn facts into a focused summary about desert tortoise.

3 WRITE

Students use report pages to explain what they learned.

FROM READING TO ANIMAL RESEARCH WRITING

READ


Desert Tortoise

Desert tortoises make their home in desert habitats in the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico. These habitats include canyons, sandy flats, and rocky foothills. The tortoises are native to the Mojave and Sonoran deserts.

Desert tortoises are cold-blooded, or ectothermic. This means they need the sun to warm them. In the winter, it is too cold for the tortoises to stay warm. Instead, they dig burrows to hibernate until spring. In the summer, desert tortoises burrow to escape the heat. This is called aestivation.

Appearance

Desert tortoises are covered by a shell called a carapace. The shell can be many different shades of brown. It can also have orange or yellow markings. The shell protects tortoises from predators that they cannot outrun. Predators, such as coyotes, cannot break open the hard shell.

Desert tortoises are usually 9 to 15 inches long, 4 to 6 inches tall, and can weigh up to 15 pounds. Males and females look alike, although males have longer tails and a gular horn. The gular horn is a bony part of the shell near their heads. The males sometimes use this horn when fighting other males to attract females. Powerful, muscular legs help the tortoises move across the rough ground.

Diet and Feeding

Desert tortoises are herbivores, surviving on plants such as grasses. Water in the desert is scarce. The tortoises get most of the water they need from their food. They will dig grooves in the sand to catch rainwater. One good drink of rainwater can last the tortoises a year.

Offspring

Female desert tortoises dig nests in the sand to lay eggs. They lay about five eggs and bury them in the sand. After this, the mother leaves the eggs to develop on their own.

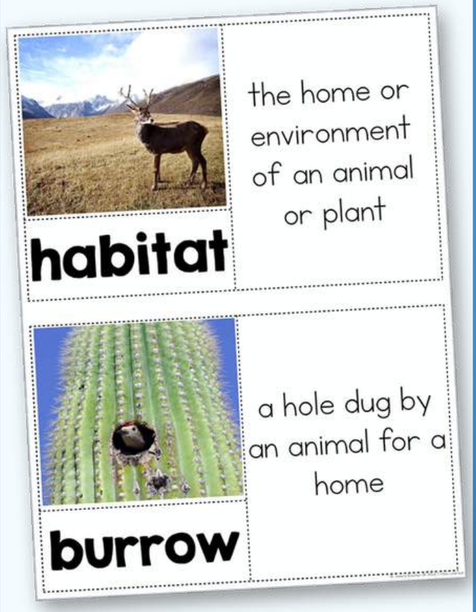
After 90 to 130 days, the baby tortoises hatch. They dig their way up to the surface and start looking for food. Baby tortoises are vulnerable to predators, and few of them will survive to adulthood. Desert tortoises take up to 15 years to reach maturity. If they do reach adulthood, they can live up to 100 years.

Threats & Predators

Desert tortoises have many natural predators, including ravens, Gila monsters, roadrunners, coyotes, and foxes. They are considered an endangered species. Habitat loss is a big reason for the tortoises' shrinking population. Desert tortoises are also illegally collected as pets. This hurts their wild population because they are unable to find mates.

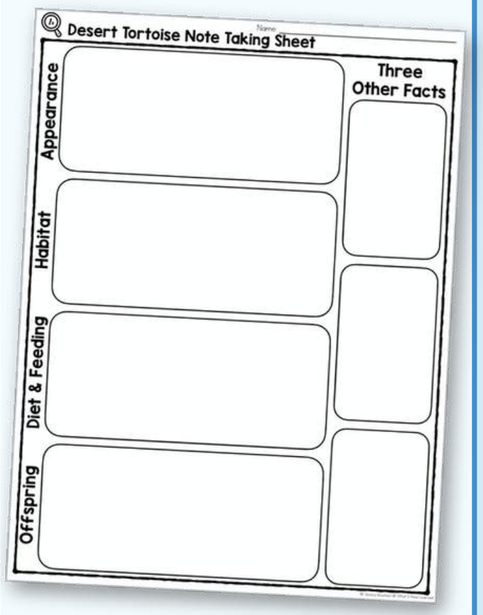
Read an informational article about desert tortoise in a format that fits your students.

LEARN



Build vocabulary with picture cards and activities about desert tortoise features and habitats.

RESEARCH


Name:

Desert Tortoise Note Taking Sheet

Appearance

Habitat

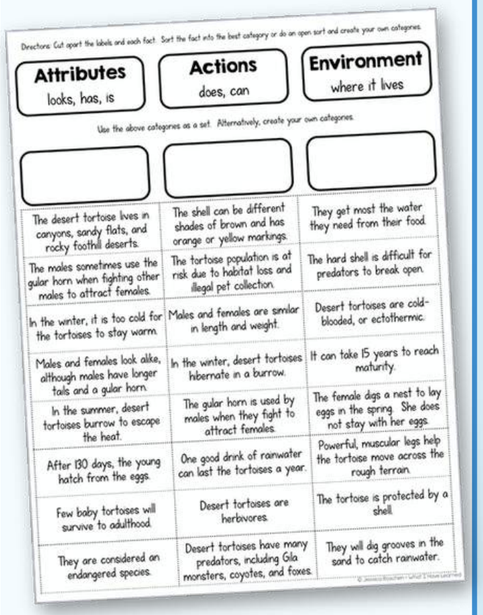
Diet & Feeding

Offspring

Three Other Facts

Gather facts about the desert tortoise's appearance, habitat, diet, and behavior.

ORGANIZE


Directions: Cut apart the labels and each fact. Sort the fact into the best category or do an open sort and create your own categories.

Attributes looks, has, is	Actions does, can	Environment where it lives

Use the above categories as a set. Alternatively, create your own categories.

The desert tortoise lives in canyons, sandy flats, and rocky foothill deserts.	The shell can be different shades of brown and has orange or yellow markings.	They get most the water they need from their food.
The males sometimes use the gular horn when fighting other males to attract females.	The tortoise population is at risk due to habitat loss and illegal pet collection.	The hard shell is difficult for predators to break open.
In the winter, it is too cold for the tortoises to stay warm.	Males and females are similar in length and weight.	Desert tortoises are cold-blooded, or ectothermic.
Males and females look alike, although males have longer tails and a gular horn.	In the winter, desert tortoises hibernate in a burrow.	It can take 15 years to reach maturity.
In the summer, desert tortoises burrow to escape the heat.	The gular horn is used by males when they fight to attract females.	The female digs a nest to lay eggs in the spring. She does not stay with her eggs.
After 130 days, the young hatch from the eggs.	One good drink of rainwater can last the tortoises a year.	Powerful, muscular legs help the tortoise move across the rough terrain.
Few baby tortoises will survive to adulthood.	Desert tortoises are herbivores.	The tortoise is protected by a shell.
They are considered an endangered species.	Desert tortoises have many predators, including Gila monsters, coyotes, and foxes.	They will dig grooves in the sand to catch rainwater.

Sort facts into appearance, habitat, behavior, and life cycle categories.

WRITE


Name:

Desert Tortoise

Use the writing pages to turn notes into an animal research report about desert tortoise.

WAYS TO USE THIS RESOURCE



1

ANIMAL STUDY

Use the articles and vocabulary pages during a science or nonfiction unit about desert tortoise.

2

GUIDED READING

Choose the article format and comprehension pages that fit your readers.

3

ANIMAL RESEARCH

Use QR-code research and note-taking sheets to collect facts from multiple sources.

4

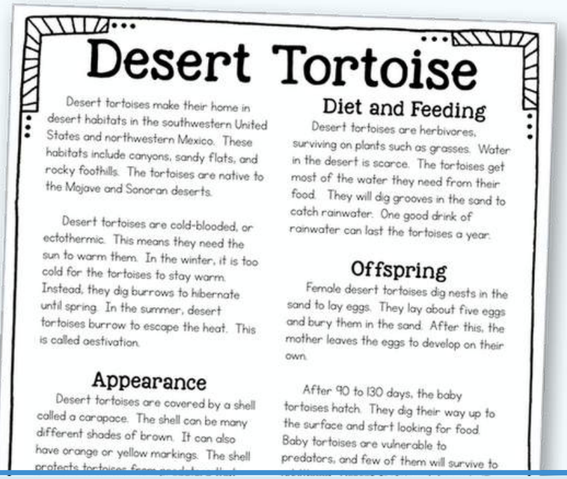
INFORMATIONAL WRITING

Move from organized notes to a clear report about desert tortoise.

YOU WILL LOVE THIS BECAUSE

PERFECT FOR SCIENCE AND ELA

Students read, write, sort, and research while learning about desert tortoise adaptations and habitats.


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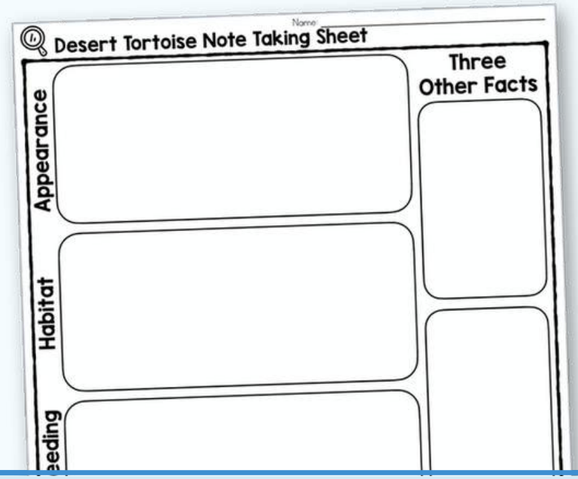
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SAVES TIME WITH CONSISTENT LAYOUTS

Clear article, activity, and writing pages make planning simple and support independent work.


Name:

Desert Tortoise Note Taking Sheet

Three Other Facts

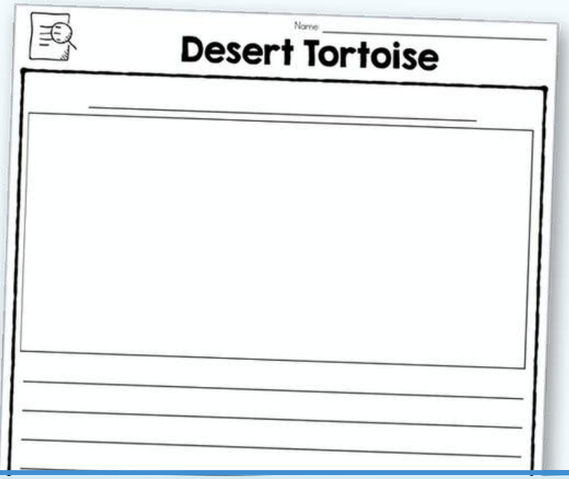
Appearance

Habitat

eeding

SUPPORTS ANIMAL RESEARCH

Vocabulary cards, fact sorts, and note-taking organizers help students prepare an informational report.


Name:

Desert Tortoise

TEACHERS LOVE IT!

★★★★★

I used this resource as a supplement to the EL Curriculum; animal defenses. My students were highly engaged and loved that they were learning!

Scooting Through 4th Grade

★★★★★

Engaging additional resource used as a supplement that my students enjoyed! Easy prep is an added bonus!

Cynthia L.

★★★★★

I had a student who loves turtles so I combined his interest with phonic skills needed to be practiced. He really enjoyed it.

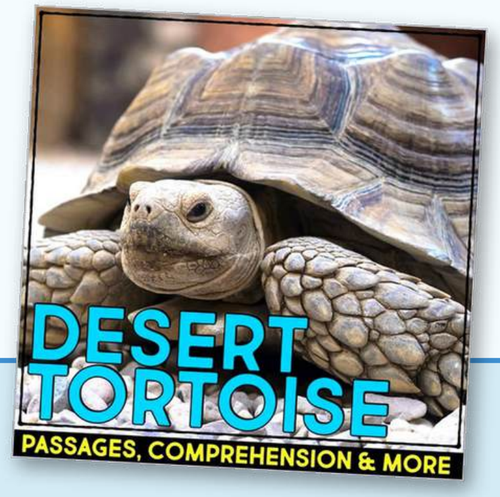
Marc C.





READY FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

- **Informational articles in two formats**
- **Vocabulary, comprehension, and research activities**
- **Note-taking and informational writing pages**



My passion is making learning accessible to all students.
I love scaffolding learning, breaking down the concepts and building them up so that students can see the connections.
I love figuring out the small components that build up to the big ideas and helping students see it all.



teach MATH | teach SCIENCE | teach READING | teach WRITING

What I have LEARNED