

# LAW DAY 2015

## Magna Carta: Icon of Liberty Celebrating the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Magna Carta Resources for the Classroom



### LESSONS PROVIDED BY FLREA

- *What Made the "Great Charter" Great PowerPoint Presentation*
  - *Middle and high school*
- *Yertle the Turtle*
  - *Elementary and middle school versions available*

These lessons are available at [www.flrea.org](http://www.flrea.org)

### WHAT IS MAGNA CARTA?

Magna Carta, "Great Charter", was authored in 1215 by feudal barons who were displeased with King John of England. They believed that the king abused his power and oppressed his subjects. Magna Carta provided the basis for the idea of a higher law.

### WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF MAGNA CARTA?

1. *Established the Rule of Law*
2. *Limited the powers of government*
3. *Identified individual rights and freedoms*

**The Great Charter of Liberty**

From its 13th Century roots in the English meadow of Runnymede, Magna Carta has transcended its original time and place to become one of the world's most recognized and enduring symbols of liberty under law.

**An International Symbol**  
Magna Carta's global presence is evident in monuments and memorials, inscriptions and representations on public buildings, art, literature, culture and the media. Magna Carta has been a source of inspiration to statesmen, diplomats, and dissidents, including Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

**Significant Today**  
The story of Magna Carta began in 1215, but it continues eight centuries forward and is still unfolding. It is the story of modern constitutional government and its associated rule-of-law values. Today we connect Magna Carta to fundamental legal principles, including due process, speedy trials, the right to travel, and trial by jury.

**Join the Conversation**  
Magna Carta is celebrating its 800th anniversary throughout 2015. Be a part of the conversation -- #magnacarta and #magnacarta800 -- or upload your own Magna Carta images on Instagram! You can also find out more about Magna Carta and anniversary events and activities.

*The American Bar Association Division for Public Education, with support for the Magna Carta Trust, created a website that tells the story of the significance of Magna Carta through images and multimedia components, including an interactive timeline.*

Visit [www. http://iconofliberty.com/](http://www.iconofliberty.com)

### VIDEO RESOURCES

Click the caption to view the video



*Horrible Histories presents the Epic Magna Carta Rap Battle*

*Ages: All*



*Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts on the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Magna Carta*

*Ages: High school and adult audiences*

### OTHER RESOURCES

*[NPR: At 800 And Aging Well, The Magna Carta Is Still a Big Draw](#)*

*[2015 Law Day Planning Guide: Magna Carta – Symbol of Freedom Under Law](#)*



Visit [www.flrea.org](http://www.flrea.org) for additional Law Day Lessons and Resources!

## Lesson Overview

**Overview:** This special Law Day lesson will highlight the history and significance of Magna Carta in celebration of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the document.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to...

- Identify key provisions within Magna Carta, including right to trial by jury, protection from cruel and unusual punishment, separation of power, limited government, et cetera.
- Compare Magna Carta to founding documents of the United States.
- Assess key provisions of Magna Carta.
- Connect key provisions of Magna Carta to the United States Bill of Rights.

**Time Required:**

- One 50 minute class period

**Materials Needed:**

- *What Made the “Great Charter” Great* PowerPoint
- Copy of the Bill of Rights (Handout A)
- Making Connections Handout (Handout B)

# WHAT MADE THE “GREAT CHARTER” GREAT?

## Procedures

*Additional speaking points are provided in the notes section of the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.*

1. Tell students that today they will be learning about a very old document that had a significant impact on many future writings. Provide participants with the date of the signing of the U.S. Constitution (September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1787; 227 years old) and have them calculate how old the U.S. Constitution is. Then, provide them with the year 1215 and have them calculate how old a document would be if it were written in 1215 (800 years old). Tell students that today, we are celebrating the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a document called Magna Carta, a document that we can still see reflected today in our U.S. Constitution, even though they were written 573 years apart.
2. Begin the PowerPoint presentation. After reading the introduction in the notes on slide 1, explain to participants that they are going to see a series of statements on the following slides. They will need to guess whether these statements exist within Magna Carta (thumbs up) or are not provided for in Magna Carta (thumbs down). Answers will appear on screen and on Presenter Handout A.

**What is Magna Carta?**

3. Slide 11 will provide a brief video summary of the concerns of a Barons which would serve as the foundation for the writing of Magna Carta (1 minute, 18 seconds). Supplement activity: have students write down the complaints their heard expressed in the video.
4. The PowerPoint presentation will continue to highlight key elements and provisions within Magna Carta as well as the lasting impact of the document. A brief segment (approximately 3 minutes, 45 seconds) from Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts’ speech about Magna Carta is included.

### Next Generation Sunshine State Standards:

SS.7.C.1.2 Trace the impact that the Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, Mayflower Compact, and Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* had on colonists’ views of government.

- Students will identify the important ideas contained in the Magna Carta...
- Students will evaluate the impact that the Magna Carta...had on the purposes of government.

## Procedures, continued

### Magna Carta and the Founding Documents of the United States

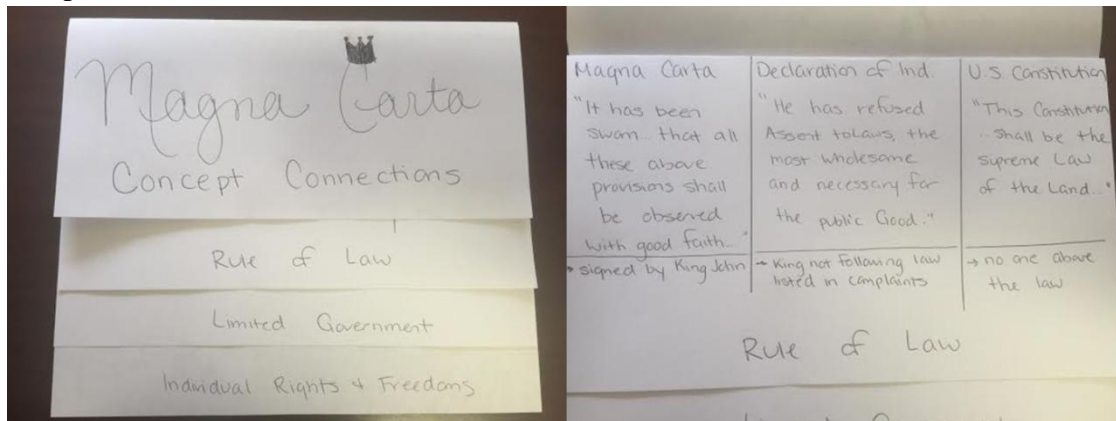
5. Key concepts within Magna Carta (rule of law, limited government, and individual rights and freedoms) are then connected to the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution through use of quotes or concepts within the documents. An activity involving creating a Foldable is included in the lesson extensions below.

**Check for understanding:** Ask students which key concept within Magna Carta they think is the most important and have them write it on a piece of paper. Encourage small group discussion followed up by a large group discussion. Observe responses for understanding.

6. View the brief visual timeline video from the United for Human Rights Video “The Story of Human Rights”. Tell students that we are going to be looking now at how Magna Carta impacted the United States Constitution in detail. Divide students into teams of 2-4. Each group will receive a copy of the Bill of Rights (Handout A) and the Making Connections Handout (Handout B). The PowerPoint slides will display an excerpt from Magna Carta. Using the Bill of Rights handout, students will work in groups to find the amendment that most closely reflects the idea expressed from Magna Carta. Teams of students will raise their hand upon finding the citation and will need to be prepared to cite the amendment and provide a summary. Allow time for students to write this information on their Making Connections handout (Handout B). Review the handout with the students as a lesson overview.

## Lesson Modifications and Extensions

- Students can create a Foldable for the document connections between Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, and the U.S. Constitution. See instructions below.



- Stagger and fold two sheets of paper. Using the photo as a guide, label each tab: Rule of Law, Limited Government, Individual Rights and Freedoms.
- Inside, students should divide each page into three columns: Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, and U.S. Constitution.
- Students will then copy the quotes/concepts for each document and put each in their own words on the same page. This will provide students with a hands-on tool for reinforcing the concepts within Magna Carta.

# UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

## THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Amendment I	Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
Amendment II	A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.
Amendment III	No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.
Amendment IV	The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.
Amendment V	No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.
Amendment VI	In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.
Amendment VII	In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.
Amendment VIII	Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.
Amendment IX	The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.
Amendment X	The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

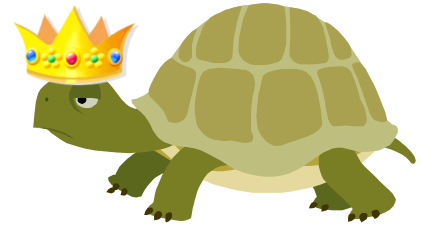
**Directions:** In the left column you will see a quote from Magna Carta. When you see this quote on the PowerPoint, try to find its match within the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. When you find the match, write the Amendment number and a brief summary of the amendment in the spaces provided below.

<b>Magna Carta</b>	<b>Bill of Rights</b>	
	<b>Amendment #</b>	<b>Summary</b>
No bailiff, on his own simple assertion, shall henceforth any one to his law, without producing faithful witness in evidence.		
No bailiff, on his own simple assertion, shall henceforth any one to his law, without producing faithful witness in evidence.		
No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned...or in any way harmed...save by the lawful judgement of his peers or by the law of the land.		
To none will we sell, to none deny or delay, right or justice.		
For a trivial offense, a free man shall be fined only in proportion to the degree of his offence, and for serious offense correspondingly, but not so heavily as to deprive him of his livelihood.		
No constable or other bailiff of ours shall take the corn or other chattels (a personal possession) of any one except he straightway give money for them...		

## Lesson Overview

## Middle School Lesson

# POETIC CIVICS



## Completing the story of *Yertle the Turtle* by Dr. Seuss

**Overview:** This lesson will have students creatively exploring concepts related to the purpose of government and restrictions on power through the children's book *Yertle the Turtle* by Dr. Seuss.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to...

- Identify and discuss the concepts of human/natural rights, rule of law, and freedom found in Dr. Seuss' *Yertle the Turtle*
- Create a system of government reflecting the concepts of human rights, rule of law, and freedom.

**Time Required:**

- One 50 minute class period

**Materials Needed:**

- Copy of *Yertle the Turtle* by Dr. Seuss
- [Video of Yertle the Turtle](#) (available on YouTube)
- Handout A: *Yertle the Turtle* Questions for Discussion
- Handout B: *You're the Poet*

### Procedures

1. Begin the lesson by reading Dr. Seuss' book *Yertle the Turtle* to the class. If you do not have the book, the story is available on YouTube to view. [Click here for video of Yertle the Turtle](#). Tell students to think about the different concepts addressed in the story as it is read. These concepts may relate to types of government, human/natural rights, the role of a leader, the rule of law, and freedom. Instruct students to create a list of concepts addressed in the story as it is read. Discuss the concepts the students have identified.
2. Distribute Handout A. Instruct students to complete the questions either individually or in pairs. Discuss with students (*guide provided*).
3. The story ends with the turtles gaining their freedom – but what is next for the turtles of the pond? Distribute Handout B: *You Be the Poet*. The students will now be completing the story of *Yertle the Turtle* to show what happened at the pond after the fall of the king. Students will need to work in pairs or small groups to create a Great Charter that includes right to a jury trial, freedom from cruel and unusual punishments, and other natural rights. Show students the following video about Magna Carta as an example of a Great Charter.
  - a. **As a more in depth lesson**, students can complete the poem in a way that reflects the ideals in the U.S. Constitution. In addition to addressing human/natural rights, rule of law, and freedom, students should incorporate checks and balances, separation of power, elections, and individual rights.

### Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

SS.7.C.1.7 Describe how the Constitution limits the powers of government through separation of powers and checks and balances.

SS.7.C.1.9 Define the rule of law and recognize its influence on the development of the American legal, political, and governmental systems.

SS.7.C.3.1 Compare different forms of government (direct democracy, representative democracy, socialism, communism, monarchy, oligarchy, autocracy).

SS.7.C.3.6 Evaluate constitutional rights and their impact on individuals and society.

## Assessment

- **Worksheet** – Students will be assessed for completion of Handout A.
- **Writing assignment** – Students will be assessed for the completion of the assignment, ability to follow directions, accuracy of information, and creativity.
- **Observation** – Students will be assessed for participation and cooperation in class and small group assignments.

## Suggested Scoring Rubric for

Assignment	Scoring	Total
Handout A: Yertle the Turtle Discussion Questions	5 points for completion and note taking during class discussion	5 points
Handout B: You're the Poet	10 points for completion 10 points for addressing concepts in the directions 10 points for correctly addressing the concepts 10 points for creativity	40 points
You're the Poet Group Work	5 points for cooperation and participation	5 points

# YERTLE THE TURTLE

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Yertle is “king of the pond”. What kind of government does this represent?

How could you characterize Yertle as a dictator?

2. Mack says:

I know, up on top you are seeing great sights,  
But down here at the bottom we, too, should have rights.  
We turtles can't stand it. Our shells will all crack!  
Besides, we need food. We are starving!" groaned Mack.

What concept is Mack addressing?

What kind of rights should the other turtles have, in your opinion?

3. King Yertle responds:

"You hush up your mouth!" howled the mighty King Yertle.  
"You've no right to talk to the world's highest turtle.  
I rule from the clouds! Over land! Over sea!  
There's nothing, no, NOTHING, that's higher than me!"

In our system of government, how are leaders kept from getting too powerful?

What concept reinforces the idea that no one is above the law, including the president, police officers, wealthy people, and celebrities? Do you think there is anyone who is above the law?

What could the moon represent in the story based on the idea of the rule of law?



# YOU'RE THE POET

Pretend you are Mack, the revolutionary turtle,  
And now you are faced with a task you must hurtle.  
The king has fallen into the muck and the mud,  
With a splash and a crash and an almighty thud.  
A Great Charter for the king will be hard to swallow,  
With rules the king and people must follow.  
Spread out the power and include everyone's rights,  
Including the right to a trial so disputes don't end in fights.  
Free from cruel and unusual punishments the people should be,  
And include any other rights to be given to you and to me.



\*Be sure to address these concepts in your poem.

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# YERTLE THE TURTLE

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Yertle is “king of the pond”. What kind of government does this represent? (*Monarchy, dictatorship*)

How could you characterize Yertle as a dictator?

*A dictator is a person who rules a country with total authority and often in a cruel or brutal way. King Yertle shows total authority without respect for the rights of those he rules.*

2. Mack says:

I know, up on top you are seeing great sights,  
But down here at the bottom we, too, should have rights.  
We turtles can't stand it. Our shells will all crack!  
Besides, we need food. We are starving!" groaned Mack.

What concept is Mack addressing?

*(Human rights, natural rights)*

Why do you think these rights are important?

3. King Yertle responds:

"You hush up your mouth!" howled the mighty King Yertle.

"You've no right to talk to the world's highest turtle.

I rule from the clouds! Over land! Over sea!

There's nothing, no, NOTHING, that's higher than me!"

In our system of government, how are leaders kept from getting too powerful?

*(U.S. Constitution, checks and balances, laws)*

What concept reinforces the idea that no one is above the law, including the president, police officers, wealthy people, and celebrities?

*(Rule of Law)*

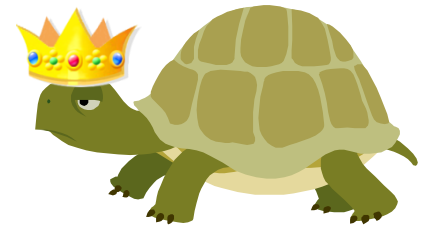
What could the moon represent in the story based on the idea of the rule of law?

*(The law)*

## Lesson Overview

Elementary Lesson

# YERTLE THE TURTLE



## Learning about laws through Dr. Seuss

**Overview:** This lesson will educate students on laws and rights while teaching them the importance of the rule of law.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to...

- Explain the consequences of an absence of rules and laws.
- Identify the Constitution as the document which establishes the structure, function, powers, and limits of American government.

**Time Required:**

- One hour

**Materials Needed:**

- Copy of *Yertle the Turtle* by Dr. Seuss
- [Video of Yertle the Turtle](#) (available on YouTube)
- “Above or Below” pictures
- “LAW” poster
- U.S. Constitution Moon
- Handout A: Turtle coloring sheet and poem

## Procedures

4. Begin the lesson by telling the class that they will be playing a game called “Above or Below”.
  - a. Groups of 3-4 students will receive pictures of six people – a president, a judge, a policeman, a parent, a child, and a celebrity. Students should cut out these pictures.
  - b. Post the paper with the word “LAW” on the wall at waist-height. Ask students what a law is. Discuss responses. Laws are rules made by government that people must follow to keep us safe and protect our rights.
  - c. Tell students that their group will need to decide if each person is above the law (not required to follow the law) or under the law (required to/must follow the law). They should then take turns posting that picture over or under the word “LAW” based on their response. Discuss why students place certain people in the places they chose.
5. Continue the lesson by reading Dr. Seuss’ book *Yertle the Turtle* to the class. If you do not have the book, the story is available on YouTube to view. [Click here for video of Yertle the Turtle.](#)
6. Ask students what they think about King Yertle and discuss the responses. Below are some follow up questions.
  - a. Is he a nice king?
  - b. A mean king?
  - c. Is he fair?
  - d. Did he care about the other turtles?

## Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

SS.2.C.1.2 Explain the consequences of an absence of rules and laws.

SS.2.C.3.1 Identify the Constitution as the document which establishes the structure, function, powers, and limits of American government.

## Procedures, continued

7. Ask students what a “right” is. A right is a freedom of some kind. In the United States, we have the right to free speech, the right to choose or not choose a religion, the right to a jury, the right to go to school, and many other rights. Ask students what rights they can think of. Discuss responses. Ask students if they think the Mack and the turtles had any rights under King Yertle.
  - a. Discuss with students what happened when King Yertle did not have any restrictions, or limits, placed on his power. What happened to the other turtles? *The turtles did not have any rights and King Yertle was able to have complete power over them.*
8. Tell students that King Yertle thought there was nothing higher than him as a ruler. Explain that in the United States, we have laws and an important document called the **United States Constitution**. The United States Constitution is the **HIGHEST** law in the land and establishes the structure, function, powers, and limits of American government. The U.S. Constitution got many ideas from a document that is having its 800<sup>th</sup> birthday this year, Magna Carta. Based on the ideas in Magna Carta, *everyone* must follow the laws and what is in the United States Constitution. This is known as the **rule of law**. The rule of law means that no one is above the law, not even people that we think are really important, like a president. Refer to the students’ responses from the activity earlier to reinforce the idea that no one is above the law. Allow students to move the people below the word law. Hold up the cut out of the moon. Explain that in the story, the moon represents the law – something that was higher than King Yertle.
9. Have a student read the poem aloud on Handout A. Tell students they will need to name and color their turtle to represent their personality. Students will then need to name rights they have by putting them on the turtle’s shell in the different shapes.
10. Post the moon on the wall. Have students tape/hang their turtles under the moon as a reminder that all people, and turtles, must follow the law and that no one is above the law.
  - a. Another option for reinforcing this idea is to hang a yard stick or ruler over the door to the classroom as a reminder of the “rule” of law.



**President**



**Police**



**Parents**



**Movie Star**



**Judge**



**Child**

**LAW**



**Each individual has rights that they need,**

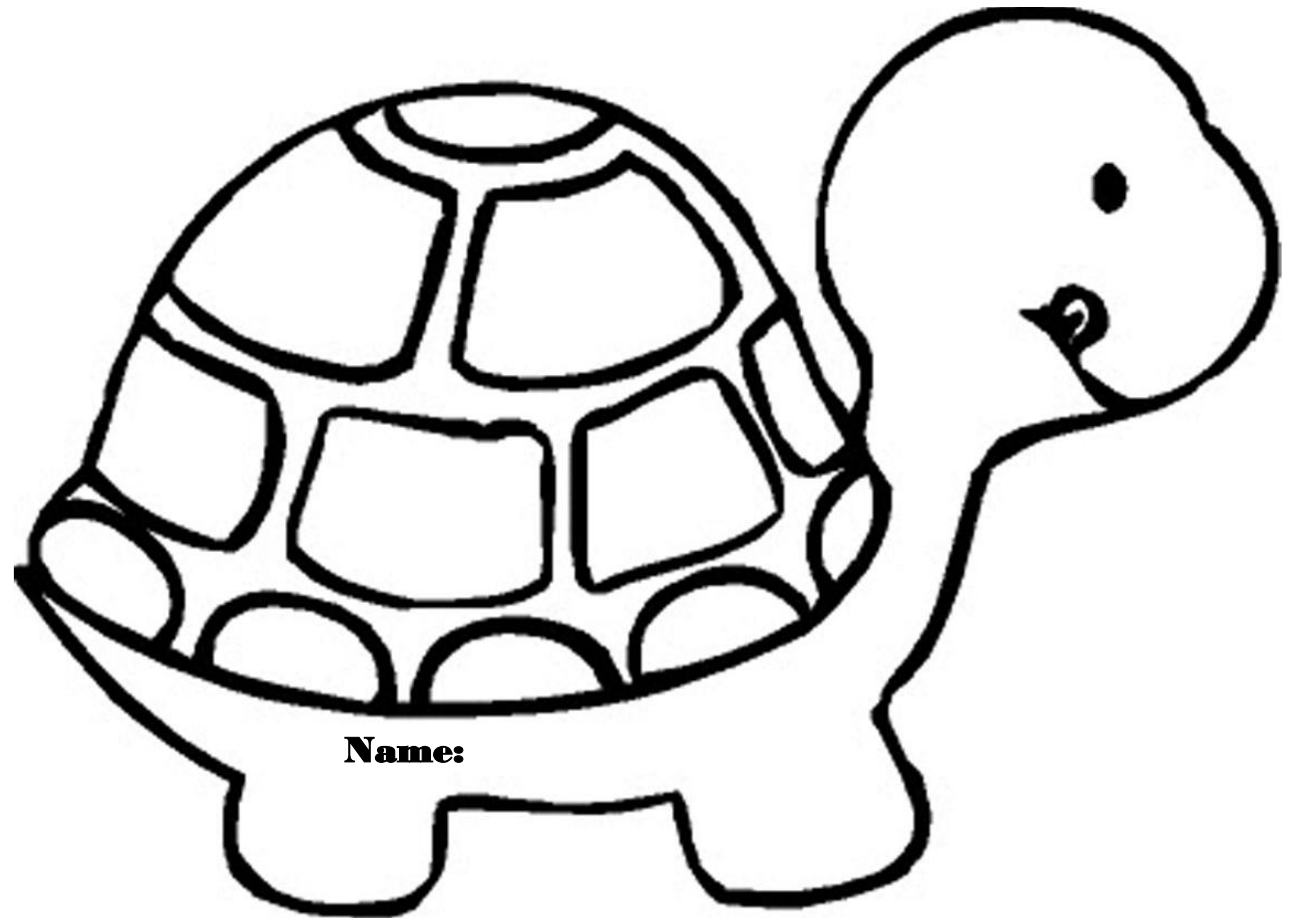
**Even turtles standing no higher than a weed.**

**Color your turtle, give it personality and flare,**

**And a name that a turtle would be proud to bear.**

**Fill in its rights on its little turtle shell,**

**So all who see the turtle will know its rights well.**



**Name:**