

# What to Do?

(Post Visit)

**Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>

**Purpose:** To give the students a chance to research and represent different sectors of the population, while deciding the fate of a community and its beach.

**Materials:**

- Research materials (computers, library, local officials and contacts, etc.)
- Informational sheet on the local community make up and the beach in question

**Teacher Background Information:**

Sea turtles spend their lives in the ocean and only the females will return to a beach to lay eggs. Female loggerhead sea turtles return to the beaches they were hatched from to lay their eggs. They will lay approximately a hundred eggs per nest and can lay up to five nests in a summer season. Females will drag their bodies up past the high tide line on the beach and dig a nest using their rear flippers. The nest is flask shaped and will be as deep as their rear flipper is long. After laying the eggs, the female will return to the sea and the eggs will incubate for approximately 60 days. Upon hatching, the hatchling sea turtles will head out to sea and swim out to sea where they will spend the next few years.

As more people move to the coastline (54 percent of the total U.S. population live in 673 coastal counties), more and more beaches are being developed and in some areas sea turtles are facing problems due to beach development, light pollution and other problems caused by the influx of people. This activity will let your students decide if a non-developed beach should be developed and if so how much of it and what rules will apply.

**Procedure:**

- 1) Have your students decide which group they would like to represent in the debate. Possible choices include business groups (developers, hotels, stores, etc.), tourism department, local environmental group, local government (town council, board of commissioners), state/federal wildlife scientists, and local community people. Try to have an even amount of students in each group.
- 2) Give each team the informational sheet and 1-3 weeks of time to develop their information, position on the topic, and to gather evidence that supports their position.
- 3) Follow the general format of a debate, which is outlined on attached sheet.
- 4) After the debate, decide which teams had the strongest evidence and decide the fate of your beach.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) What was the most interesting fact that you learned during your research?
- 2) Did you change your mind regarding the development after hearing the other sides?
- 3) What impact will continuing development have on sea turtle populations?
- 4) What other problems are sea turtles facing?

**Informational Sheet on Community Demographics and the Local Beach**

Total Population	29,967
Square miles (land)	383.58
Population per square mile	78.13
Average Household Income	\$34,260
Per Capita Household Income	\$14,060
Economy now centers on fishing and some tourism	

**TOPIC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Opposition:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Proponents:** \_\_\_\_\_

You are now a member of your selected team. Your team will be graded as a whole. This means that you will be as strong as your weakest link. Be sure that you work together so that all members of your team have an adequate background of the positions and arguments that you will be presenting.

1. There will be an opening statement made by your team. This should be 3-5 minutes long and should state your team's position and the arguments/solutions you will be presenting. Responsible Members: \_\_\_\_\_

2. You should have at least 15 questions that can be asked of each of your 3 opponents. These should be on separate sheets of paper or on note cards for easy reference. The questions should be specifically directed to your opponents and should be concise and clear. Responsible Members: \_\_\_\_\_

3. You should have answers prepared which will be used to respond to your opponents' questions. Imagine that you are from the other teams and determine what questions may be asked of your team. Responsible Members: \_\_\_\_\_

4. You should have a final conclusive argument/statement drawn up which will be written at the end of your debate. This should be no longer than 7 minutes. You should take notes during the entire debate so that you may refer to these in your final presentation of your team's views. Responsible Members: \_\_\_\_\_

When you have determined who will be responsible for each portion of your team's debate, it is up to you to prepare yourself for the challenge that lies ahead. Only one team will win this debate. The winning team will:

- Have a solid background regarding all material
- Have plenty of evidence to back up claims
- Use teamwork to teach all in group the important concepts behind specific positions
- Be creative/psyche out opponents
- Outclass opponents/never give an answer of "uh...."