

Turtles

March/April 2021

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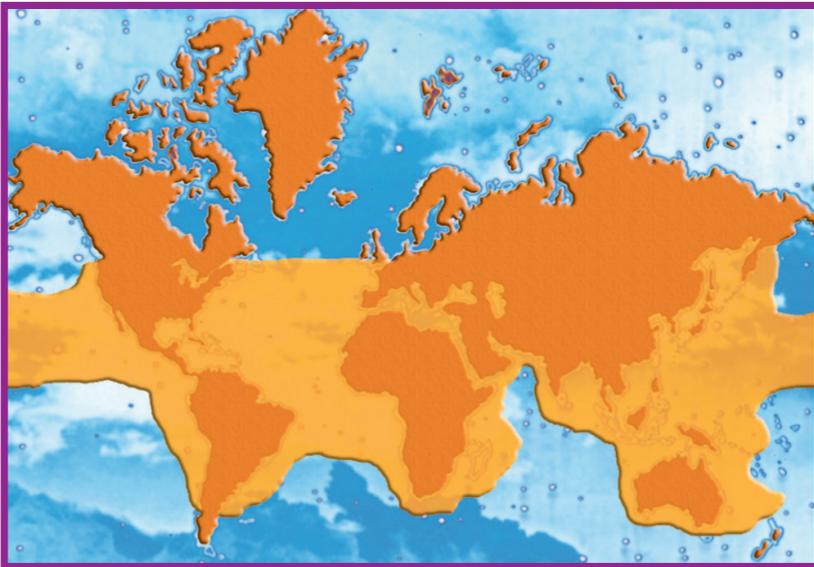
Turtles features the letter **T**. A lowercase **t** is pretty easy to write (maybe not as easy as a lowercase **l**), and most children can draw one by their third birthdays—give or take a few months.

An uppercase **T** requires a bit more work, since the juncture of the two lines demands more fine motor control. **T** isn't too hard to say, either. It's one of the earlier sounds an infant will babble and one of the easier sounds a new talker will pronounce.



Learning about **in** and **out** probably comes just after the “let’s drop everything from the high chair” stage. “Let’s drop” is an exercise in controlling the muscles that grasp and release, and “**in** and **out**” is a more refined exploration of the same activity. When your child is putting cereal **in** a cup and taking it **out** again, she’s showing you how wonderfully her eyes, fingers, wrists, and arms can work together.

Where in the WORLD? ● Turtles



Turtles are found on every continent except Antarctica. And sea turtles can be found swimming thousands of miles over open ocean.

It's a ZOO out there!

Turtles are such a diverse group that you can go to a variety of places to see them in action. If you live near a major aquarium, giant sea turtles are likely to be an important attraction. Call ahead to find out when they're fed. A diver often enters the tank to deliver lunch. On a warm summer's day, head to your local nature center or a nearby lazy stream to see pond turtles. Look for them basking in the sun. As you watch the animals, observe the following:

At the aquarium:

- Does the turtle have flippers? How do they help it swim?
- What does the turtle like to eat?
- Is the turtle paying any attention to the other turtles?

At the pond:

- Why is the turtle sitting in the sun?
- Does the turtle's coloring make it easy or hard to see?

Reading Resource

Every title in the *Ranger Rick Zootles* series is designed to be used for fun and learning, and as a reading resource as well. The pages are written simply and address various stages of emerging literacy, and they encourage new readers to exercise their new skills at just the right level. Reading *Ranger Rick Zootles* together will provide “together time” for you and your child—and reinforce vocabulary, comprehension, and early reading skills, too.

Give Me a "T"

All these words are missing letters.
Put a "t" in each blank to see what they are.



en



_iger



an_



po_a_o



foo_ball



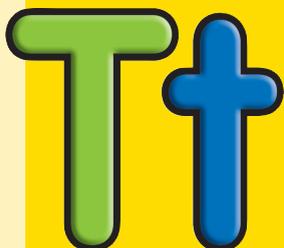
_ruck



eapo



ha_



Sometimes the letter "t" is found at the beginning of a word, as in "tree."

How many of the words above begin with the letter "t"?

Sometimes the letter "t" is found at the end of a word, as in "cat."

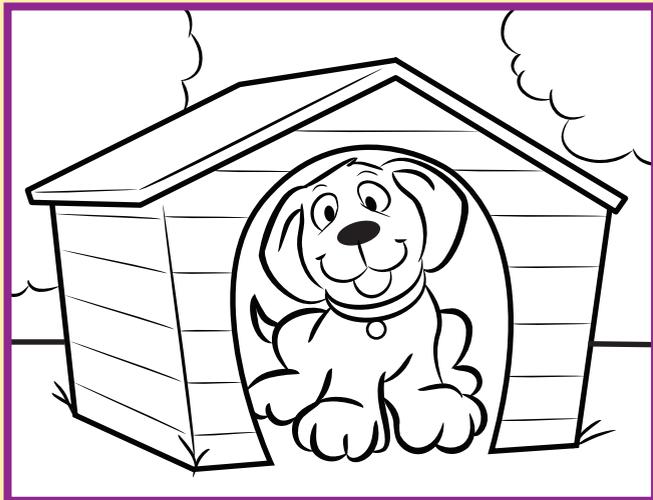
How many of the words above end with the letter "t"?

Do you see any words that have the letter "t" in the middle?

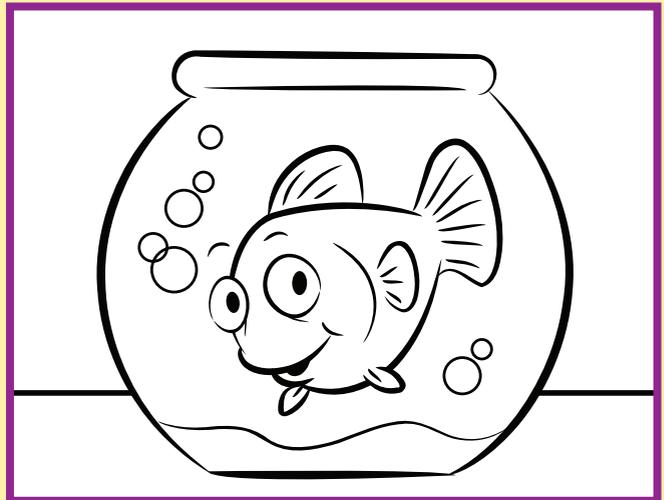
In or Out?



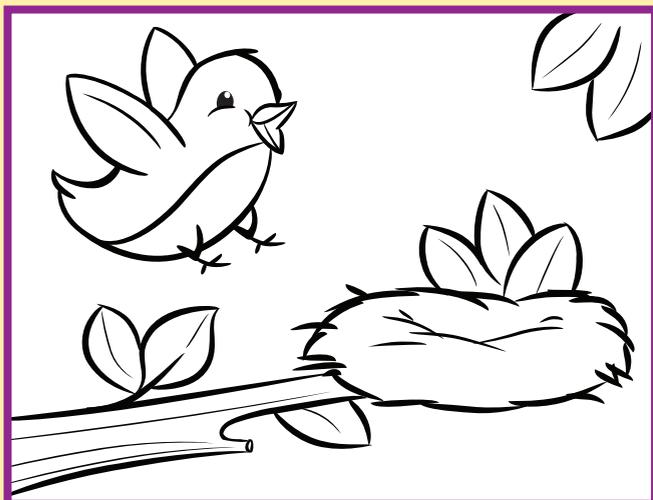
Can you tell if the animal is **in** or **out** in each picture? If the animal is **in** something, color it yellow. If the animal is **out**, color it green. Now color everything else however you'd like. (You can even decide if you want to color **in** or **outside** the lines!)



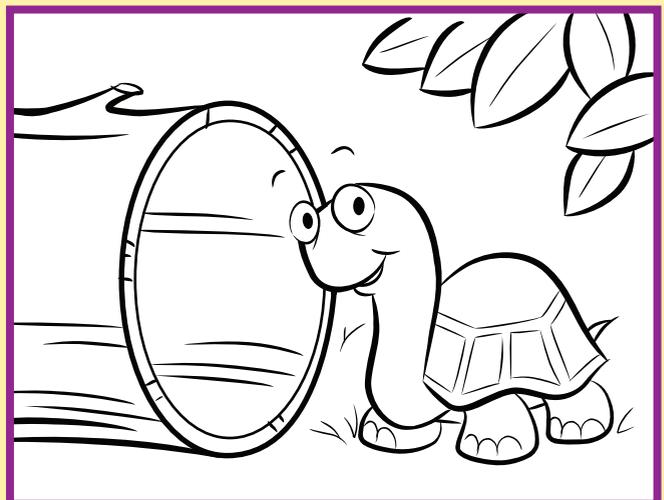
Is the dog **in** or **out** of the doghouse?



Is the fish **in** or **out** of the fishbowl?



Is the bird **in** or **out** of the nest?



Is the turtle **in** or **out** of the log?

What ELSE can we DO?

- **Tip-Top Turtles (p. 1)** has plenty of words with the “t” sound. Reading specialists talk about a child’s ability to isolate sounds in words as a precursor to reading. Parents have always taught this skill by reciting nursery rhymes or singing songs. Try this rhyming game with a four- or five-year old.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Have your four-year old say a word, such as “toe” and then say it again without the “t” sound (it should be “oh”). Then try it with words such as “tape,” “tear,” and “tan.” If your child finds this hard to do, try again in a few months.

- **Totally Turtles (p. 2-3)** tells you everything you ever needed to know about turtles. Unlike tigers, for instance, which are all pretty much the same, turtles are amazingly varied in their sizes, colors, and lifestyles.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Time how long your child can hold her breath. Would that be long enough for a little turtle to swim to the middle of a pond or a big turtle to the bottom of the ocean?

- **Turtle Temperature (p. 4-5)** introduces the concept of “warm-blooded” and “cold-blooded.” You can make this idea more concrete for your child with the following activity.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Take your child’s temperature three or four times during the day. At the same time, check the temperature outside, which, if you had a turtle in your yard, would be the turtle’s body temperature. Draw a graph that compares your child’s temperature to the turtle’s.

- **Types of Turtles (p. 6-7)** tells us even more about the remarkable diversity among the turtles. They can be land-based or ocean dwellers, enormous or teeny-weeny. Turtles have managed to adapt to just about every ecosystem on the planet.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Pretend to be turtles! First be a sea turtle, swimming and gliding around the house.

Then be a very old tortoise and lumber so-o-o slowly from the kitchen to the bedroom. A freshwater turtle might bask on a log (or couch) until she gets too hot and flops into a pond (or pillow) with a splash!

- **Turtle Tail and Slowpoke (p. 8-9)** are short and easily remembered poems. In addition to showcasing the “t” sound, by reciting these poems from time to time with your child, you’ll also create awareness of the sounds that make the rhymes.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Look around the house for things that start with the “t” sound. Then look for things that end with “t.” Can your child also come up with words that continue the poems’ rhymes: do-you, play-day, and seek-week? Nonsense words count.

- **Turtle Trivia (p. 10-11)** isn’t exactly trivial if you’re a turtle. These facts, in fact, help your child appreciate the remarkable ways different species can adapt to the same environment.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Draw a large turtle on a piece of paper with a game board on its back. Use the turtle trivia facts found in this book, and others found easily online. For each correct answer, the player moves one space.

- **A Turtle Tot’s Tale (p. 12-15)** explores the dangers a young sea turtle faces from the moment it hatches until it finds its way to the sea. With no mother to guide it, the turtle depends on instinct and good fortune.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Have a heart-to-heart with your child about the way different species survive from infancy to adulthood. Birds and mammals care for their young, but amphibians and reptiles fend for themselves. Assure your child that baby turtles aren’t lonely.

- **A Long Journey (p. 16)** shows us how scientists have discovered more about the amazing journeys of sea turtles.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** It’s time once again to get out the atlas so you can track the sea turtle’s adventures. Compare it to a route you took on your last big driving trip.

Otto:
An adventure-
loving otter



It could be a lot
of fun to act like
a turtle!

Allie:
An intrepid hedgehog



RangerRick

Zootles®

Resource Corner