

# Far From Home

Two teens are swept up in a race to save a dying sea turtle

## About the Story

**Lexile:** 830L (captions and sidebars) For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

## Learning Objectives:

to explore the key ideas of a play about a sea turtle rescue and then write a news article or create a podcast about the events of the story

## Key Skills:

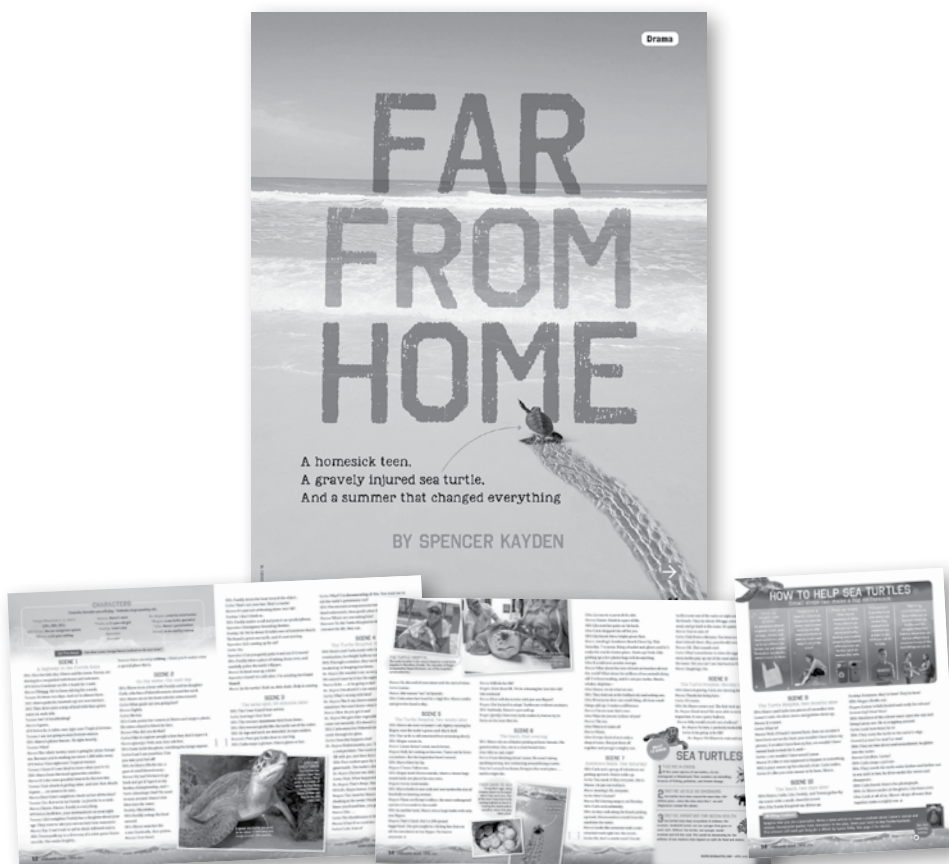
setting, author's craft, character, text structure, interpreting text, inference, key ideas

## Essential Questions:

- How do we cope with change?
- How are environmental problems solved?
- How can one person make a difference?

## Standards:

The texts and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: **R.1, R.2, R.3, R.5, R.9, R.10, W.2, W.9, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6.** For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



## Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at  
**scope.scholastic.com.**

### Multimedia:

- Vocabulary Slideshow

**Literature Connections:** ideas for connecting to curricular texts

### Skill Builders to print or project:

- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
  - Quiz\*
  - **Core Skills Workout:** Inference\*
  - **Literary Elements:** Character Thinking Tool
  - Preparing to Write: The Amazing Turtle Rescue
  - Contest Entry Form
- \* Available on two levels

# Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

## 1 Preparing to Read

**Do-Now: Answer a Riddle.**

(3 minutes)

Write this riddle on the board for students to solve as they enter the classroom: *My species has been around for 110 million years and once shared the planet with the T. rex. I can hold my breath for up to seven hours and dive to depths of more than 3,000 feet. I migrate as far as 10,000 miles a year. Jellyfish are one of my favorite foods. Many of my kind die from eating humans' plastic trash that ends up in the ocean. Who am I?* The answer is “a sea turtle.” Share with students that an estimated 1 million marine animals are killed each year by plastic waste, and let students know they are about to read a play that discusses this problem.

### Preview vocabulary.

(7 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project the **Vocabulary Slideshow**. Words: *Coast Guard, documenting, fiber, ingesting, maneuver, solemnly, sulking*

## 2 Reading and Discussing the Play

(45 minutes, activity sheet online)

- Read aloud the As You Read box on page 12.
- Assign parts and read the play as a class.
- Invite students to share anything they found surprising or interesting. Then discuss the following questions as a class.

### Close-Reading Questions

**Why might the author have included the GPS directions in Scene 1?** (setting, author's craft) *The author likely included the GPS directions to help readers feel as if they are in the car with Marco and his mother.*

**In Scene 1, how does Marco feel about moving to Florida? How do you know?**

(character) *Marco is upset about moving to Florida. You can tell by the short and sarcastic answers that he gives his mom when she tries to cheer him up. For example, as they drive through the Keys, Teresa says, “Isn’t it breathtaking?,” and Marco unenthusiastically replies, “I guess.” When Teresa tells Marco that he can go out on a boat the next day, Marco replies sarcastically that he “can’t wait to sail in shark-infested waters.” These remarks show that Marco is upset and cannot see the positive aspects of his new home.*

**What do the characters of Dr. Hayes and Megan contribute to the play?** (text structure)

*Dr. Hayes and Megan help Marco (and therefore readers) understand threats that sea turtles face and how they are being helped.*

**In Scene 6, Lita says to Marco, “Each of us is only a drop of water. But put them all together, and you get a mighty sea.” What is she trying to explain to Marco?** (interpreting text) *Lita is trying to tell Marco that the actions of individuals, although they may seem small or insignificant on their own, make a difference when you add them up. Change happens when everyone comes together and does their part—no matter how small.*

**How does Marco seem to feel about Mel at the start of the play? How do his feelings change?** (character, inference) *At the start of the play, Marco seems annoyed by Mel. In Scene 2, he crosses his arms and seems uninterested in talking to Mel. In Scene 3, Marco “glares” at her when she takes a photo of Elmar. However, by the end of Scene 4, his attitude has changed. After they name Elmar, he gives Mel a high five. In Scene 7, he decides to go to her beach cleanup;*

in Scene 8, we learn that Marco asked Mel to come to the Turtle Hospital on the day of Elmar's surgery. This shows that Marco has come to see Mel as a friend.

**In Scene 9, how does Marco view his move to Florida? How do you know?** (inference)

*Marco seems to view the move as destiny. You can tell from his remarks to Mel about how if he had never moved to the Keys, then they never would have met and saved Elmar.*

### Analyze the text features.

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

- Have students work in groups to read the captions and sidebars.
- Invite volunteers from each group to share anything they found surprising or interesting.
- Discuss the following questions as a class.

### Critical-Thinking Questions

**Why should people care about sea turtles?**

*Answers will vary. Some students may say that sea turtles are important because they help keep marine ecosystems in balance. Others may say that sea turtles are extraordinary and special creatures that have been on our planet for more than 100 million years. Still others may argue*

*for the intrinsic value of all creatures—in other words, the idea that all animals are important, regardless of their benefit to humans.*

**What skills and traits do you think would be important for someone who works in a place like the Turtle Hospital?** *Answers will*

*vary. Students may say education in marine biology and veterinary medicine would be helpful. Important traits include resilience, patience, resourcefulness, compassion, fortitude, and the ability to solve problems and think quickly.*

**Consider the sidebar “How to Help Sea Turtles.” Why might the author have chosen to include this information?** *The author*

*may have included this sidebar because the play highlights the many threats that sea turtles face, which may leave readers with a desire to help.*

## 3 Skill Building: Key Ideas

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students complete **Preparing to Write: The Amazing Turtle Rescue**. This activity will prepare them for the prompt on page 16. *For alternate culminating tasks, see the box below.*

## Differentiate and Customize

### For Struggling Readers

Choose a character from the play. In a well-organized paragraph, list three of that character's traits. Support your ideas with text evidence.

### For Advanced Readers

Research a conservation group that rescues sea turtles. In a well-organized essay, explain the work the group does, its biggest challenges and how it is working to solve those challenges, and why the work it does is important.

### For Playwrights

Write a sequel to the play that takes place the summer after Elmar's rescue. Be sure that your story stays true to the characters.

### For Advocates

Create a PSA about the plight of sea turtles and how we can help them. Your PSA can be in the form of a video, slideshow, or poster. Be sure to explain the threats sea turtles face, why these creatures are important, and how to help them.