MEET THEM AT PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

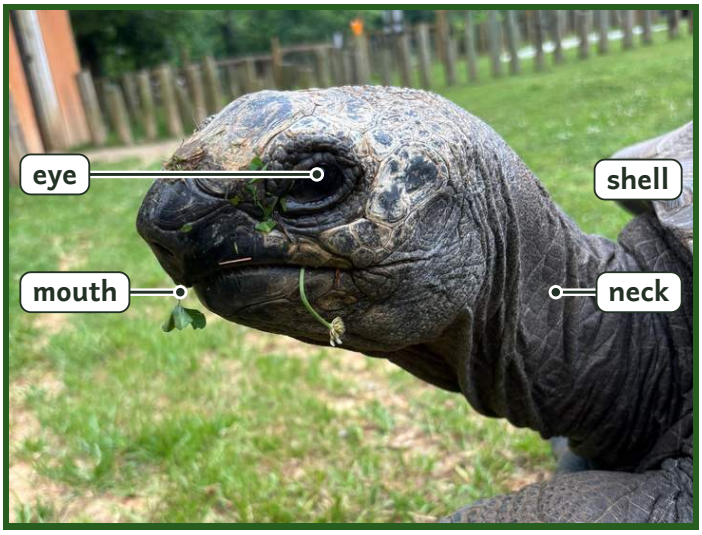
ALDABRA GIANT TORTOISE

Aldabrachelys gigantea

GRADES K–2

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
Teachers may copy and share this sheet freely as long as they credit Plumpton Park Zoo.

Teachers: read this page aloud, one part at a time (about 5 minutes). Children follow along and say the bold words.



A close look at a giant tortoise.

Its body

A tortoise has a big **shell**.
The shell is part of its body.
It has thick legs.
A big one can weigh 550 pounds.

Its home (habitat)

Wild ones live on Aldabra.
Aldabra is a group of islands.
Four live at our zoo.
They are Ally, Groot, Homer and Marge.



■ Lives in parts of this area ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

Its food

It eats grass and leaves.
It eats herbs too.

Its babies (life cycle)

A baby is a **hatchling**.
It comes out of an egg.
It is about 3 inches long.
Its parents do not care for it.

Fun facts

It can live over 100 years!
Mud helps stop mosquito bites.
A group is called a creep.

Words to know

hatchling: a baby that just came out of its egg
herbs: small soft plants
shell: the hard cover on its back

Talk about it

1. What protects a tortoise's body?
2. How big is a hatchling?
3. Why does a tortoise get in the mud?

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/reptiles-and-amphibians/aldabra-giant-tortoise/ · **Sources:** UNESCO World Heritage Centre; Walton et al., Biodiversity and Conservation (2019); The Orianne Society; Nature Seychelles; Smithsonian Magazine; Smithsonian's National Zoo (mud-wallow note).
Supports Maryland and Delaware (NGSS) and Pennsylvania (STEELS) standards: K-LS1-1 (3.1.K.A)
Plumpton Park Zoo · 1416 Telegraph Rd, Rising Sun, MD 21911 · (410) 658-6850 · plumptonparkzoo.org · a 501(c)(3) nonprofit zoo · Photo: Plumpton Park Zoo

ALDABRA GIANT TORTOISE

Before and after your visit

GRADES K–2

Page 2 of the aldabra giant tortoise fact sheet for grades K–2 · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
Teachers may copy and share this sheet freely as long as they credit Plumpton Park Zoo.

Name _____ **Date** _____

Before you visit · 5 minutes

What do you think? Circle **YES** or **NO**.

1. A tortoise has a big shell. **YES** **NO**
2. A tortoise eats mostly meat. **YES** **NO**
3. A baby tortoise comes from an egg. **YES** **NO**
4. A new hatchling is very big. **YES** **NO**

At the zoo · with a partner

Check each one you see.

- ☐ shell
- ☐ eye
- ☐ neck
- ☐ thick legs
- ☐ mouth
- ☐ mud

What is it doing? Circle one.

eating · walking · resting · in mud

After your visit · 10 minutes

Draw a tortoise eating grass. Show its big shell.

Draw here

A tortoise has a _____

I learned that _____

ADJUST IT Kindergarten: read everything aloud; children talk and draw, and an adult writes their words. **Grade 2:** children read page 1 on their own. **Grades 3–5:** use the regular aldabra giant tortoise sheet on Teacher Resources. **Second source:** read about this animal in your class database or a library book too, then ask what both said and what was new. **No zoo trip?** Check off what you can find in the photo on page 1. **Answers:** 1 yes, 2 no, 3 yes, 4 no.

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/reptiles-and-amphibians/aldabra-giant-tortoise/ · Page 1 of this sheet has the words and picture this page refers to.
Science, grades K–1: Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): K-LS1-1 · Pennsylvania (STEELS): 3.1.K.A
Reading and writing, grade 1: Maryland and Delaware: RI.1.1 · RI.1.7 · RI.1.9 · W.1.8 · Pennsylvania: CC.1.2.1.B · CC.1.2.1.G · CC.1.2.1.I · CC.1.4.1.W
Plumpton Park Zoo · 1416 Telegraph Rd, Rising Sun, MD 21911 · (410) 658-6850 · plumptonparkzoo.org · a 501(c)(3) nonprofit zoo