

Bedtime stories about turtles.

3 stories to read aloud at bedtime, each with its own picture and a calm, sleepy ending. Written for ages 3 to 8.



Myrtle and the Warm Stone

about 3 min

Two Ways to the Pond

about 3 min

Nubbin's Collection

about 3 min

Reading times assume a slow bedtime pace of about 110 words a minute. Every story is also free to read online at pimlo.app/bedtime-stories/turtles.



Myrtle and the Warm Stone

Myrtle was a pond turtle with a shell the color of moss and a small, wise face. She loved the sun. All afternoon she had sat in it, warm right down to her toes. But now the sun was sinking behind the willows, and the air was turning cool.

"I need somewhere warm to rest," said Myrtle. She climbed slowly onto a fallen log at the edge of the pond. But the log was in the shade, and it felt damp and chilly under her tummy. "Not here," she decided, and slid back into the water with a soft plop.

Next she tried a big lily pad. It was flat and green and very pretty. But when Myrtle climbed on, it tipped and wobbled, and water lapped over the edge. "Much too wobbly," she said, and paddled on.

Then, on the far side of the pond, she found it: a wide, flat stone that had sat in the sunshine all day long. Myrtle pulled herself up and settled down on top. The stone was warm, warm as a blanket fresh from the dryer. The warmth crept up through her shell and into her toes.

Myrtle stretched out her neck and closed her eyes halfway. Around her, the pond was going quiet. A dragonfly zipped home. A frog gave one last croak. The first star appeared in the water beside her, wobbling a little. When the stone had given her the very last of its warmth, Myrtle slid gently into the shallow water by its edge, tucked herself in among the soft weeds and fell asleep.

The end. Goodnight.



Two Ways to the Pond

Tuck and Wade were two turtles who lived in the meadow and slept in the same pond. Every evening, they set off home at the same time. And every evening, they took different paths.

"I like the stream path," said Tuck. "It's cool and shady, and I can hear the water." "I like the clover path," said Wade. "It's soft and sweet, and the bees hum." So off they went, in two directions, very slowly, because they were turtles.

Tuck walked along the stream. He watched a leaf float by like a little boat. He saw a heron standing on one leg, perfectly still. He found a smooth white pebble and stopped to look at it for a long time. Then he walked on.

Wade walked through the clover. She smelled the pink flowers and watched a bumblebee doze on a blossom. She saw a family of rabbits nibbling in the dusk. She found a snail on a stem and said good evening. Then she walked on.

They reached the pond at exactly the same moment, from two different sides. "What did you see?" asked Wade. So Tuck told her about the leaf boat, the heron and the white pebble. Wade told him about the sleepy bee, the rabbits and the snail. "Two paths are better than one," said Tuck, "when you share them." Then they settled side by side in the warm shallows, and the pond rocked them gently to sleep.

The end. Goodnight.



Nubbin's Collection

Nubbin was a very young turtle, no bigger than a cookie. He couldn't carry much on his back, because his shell was full of turtle. So he kept a different kind of collection. He collected things he had seen.

In the morning, he collected a shell on the shore, pink inside like the morning sky. He didn't take it. He just looked at it carefully, so he would remember. Then he said, "That's number one," and went on.

At lunchtime, he collected a feather, long and gray, floating in a rock pool. That was number two. In the afternoon, he collected a crab waving one claw at him from under a stone, which was number three, and the shape of a cloud that looked exactly like a turtle, which was number four.

At sunset, he went to see his grandmother, who was very old and very big and lived on the warm sand at the top of the beach. "What did you collect today?" she asked, as she always did. Nubbin told her everything: the pink shell, the gray feather, the waving crab, the turtle cloud. Grandmother nodded slowly at each one.

"And one more," she said, and pointed her nose at the sea. The moon was rising, and it had made a silver path across the water, all the way to the shore. "Number five," whispered Nubbin. He tucked himself in beside his grandmother's great

warm shell, listening to the waves, and went to sleep with all five things safe in his memory.

The end. Goodnight.