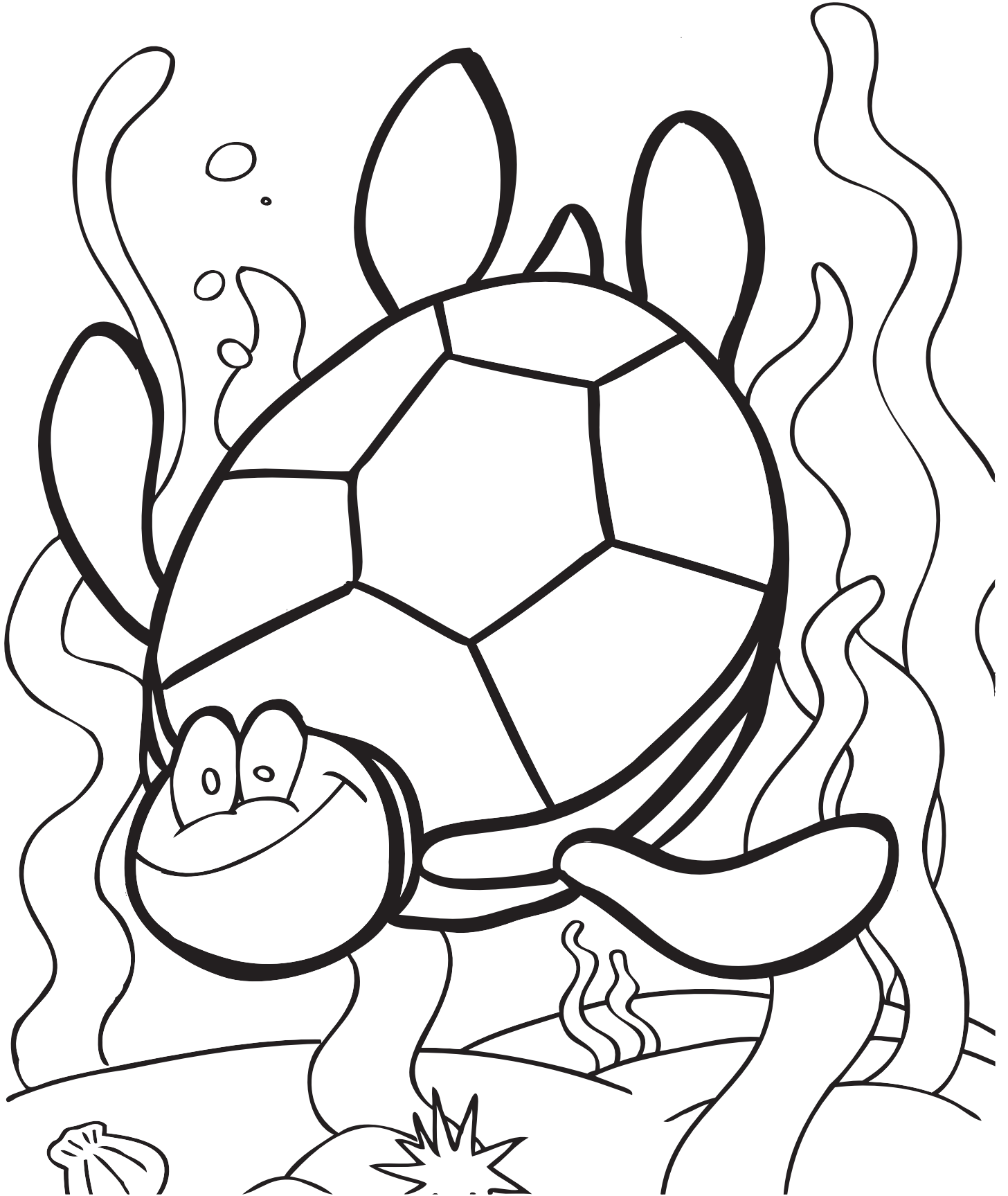


Meet Tina

the sea turtle



How does an oil spill affect animals?

Turtles

What happens if you eat something that's bad for you? You might get very sick. Oysters and clams are two of sea turtles' favorite foods, but if a turtle eats an oyster or clam with oil, the oil could hurt the turtle and make it sick. Turtles are also very picky about how they lay their eggs. If oil gets on turtle eggs, the babies might not grow properly and be born deformed.

Birds

Have you ever been so hot on the beach sand that you want to swim in the cool ocean? Seabirds like pelicans spend a lot of time on the water and need their feathers so they can keep warm against the cool water. But if birds get oil on themselves, they can't stay warm because their feathers are damaged. Oil also makes it harder for birds to fly out of the water.

Manatees and dolphins

Manatees and dolphins are mammals, which means they can't breathe underwater. They have to swim up to the water surface to breathe. Oil is lighter than water, so it floats on top of the surface. This means manatees and dolphins have to touch the oil when they swim up to breathe. If they do touch the oil, their eyes can hurt and they can get a little sick.

Find more kid-friendly resources for learning about the Gulf oil spill at SpillSmarts.com