

Turtle Geometry



Engage and Reflect

Watch *Virtual Vitamin Z - Zoo Educational Lesson: Giving the Blanding's Turtle a Head-Start at Life* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgFHLwr-f3k>



Skills

- Observation
- Patterns



Math Concepts / Standards

- Identify and describe shapes.
- Analyze, compare, create, and compose shapes

NGSS Science and Engineering Practices

- Analyzing and interpreting data



Experience

- 5-10 minutes
- 1 or more people

We share our backyards and neighborhoods with many species of animals, including turtles. Turtles have shells to protect their bodies, they can retract their head, legs and tails inside the shell if a predator tries to eat them. The top part of their shell is called a carapace and the bottom is a plastron. The shell is made of scutes, large, hard scales that fit together in geometric patterns, helping to keep the turtle safe!



Celebrating and Saving Wildlife

The Detroit Zoological Society participates in a headstarting program for Blanding's turtles, a native Michigan species. Female turtles are brought to the Zoo, where they lay eggs, then returned to their natural habitat. The eggs are cared for until they hatch and the young turtles are about a year old, then they are returned to the wild. There are many predators of young turtles, so this helps the species' population increase and stabilize.



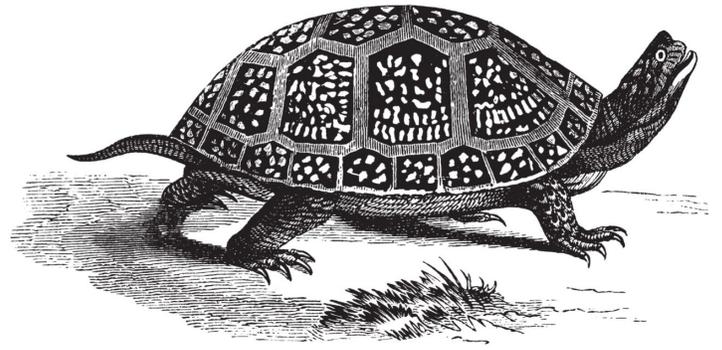
Take Action

If you see a turtle trying to cross the road, consider stopping to help him or her cross, but only if it's safe to do so. Always move a turtle in the direction they are already heading, even if it's away from the water. If you see turtles crossing at the same place every year, advocate to have signage put up to warn drivers to be on the lookout!

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Tools

Paper
Colored paper
Scissors
Glue



1 or more people

Directions

- Print or draw the outline of a turtle.
- Cut shapes out of colored paper.
- Line up the shapes to cover the shell. .

Notes - This activity can be scaled up or down. For young children, cut out simple shapes for them, in one or two colors. For elementary aged children, do more complex patterns with multiple shapes and colors. For older learners, look up actual turtle patterns and replicate them. Making close observations of a photo and drawing what you see practices observation skills and can help you learn what different species of turtles look like!

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