

## Dear Family,

Your child is working on a STEM project called *Ron's Habitat Adventure*. STEM stands for **S**cience, **T**echnology, **E**ngineering, and **M**ath. Your child met Ron the Armadillo™ and learned about a problem that he or she will be helping to solve. You can watch an animated version of **Ron's Habitat Adventure** story by visiting [hand2mind.com/sia/habitats](http://hand2mind.com/sia/habitats).

Today, we did an activity called "Habitat Homes." This activity—the first of four—introduced children to this science concept:

- A habitat has the things a plant or animal needs to live.

Ask your child to tell you what he or she learned about the desert and pond habitats. Encourage your child to use the chart on the back of this page to describe the habitats.

If your child needs help in telling you about what we did, use prompts such as *What is a habitat? Which habitat is very dry? Which habitat has more water? Which habitat has grasses?*

### Try This at Home: Backyard Habitats

Observe a habitat near your home. You might look at the plants and animals that live in your backyard or in a city park.



Ask your child to find the plants that live in the habitat. *Are there grasses, trees, or cactus? Is the habitat wet or dry? What kinds of animals might live in the habitat?*

Look for animals that live in the habitat or signs that an animal lives nearby. *What kinds of things do the animals eat? Where do they make their nests? Where do they hide from enemies?* Help your child see how the habitat gives the animals the things that they need to live.



# Compare Habitats

We learned about pond and desert habitats.

| Habitat   | Sunlight | Water | Plants | Animals |
|---|----------|-------|--------|---------|
| <div>Pond</div>      |          |       |        |         |
| <div>Desert</div>  |          |       |        |         |

## Dear Family,

Today we did an activity called “What Eats What?” from *Ron’s Habitat Adventure*. This activity introduced children to this science concept:

- An animal’s habitat has the food the animal needs to live and grow.

Let your child tell you what happened in the activity. If your child needs help telling you about the activity, use prompts such as *What animals live in a pond? Where do the pond animals get the food they need to live and grow?* As your child speaks, listen for new words such as **food chains**, **energy**, **algae**, and **arrow**.

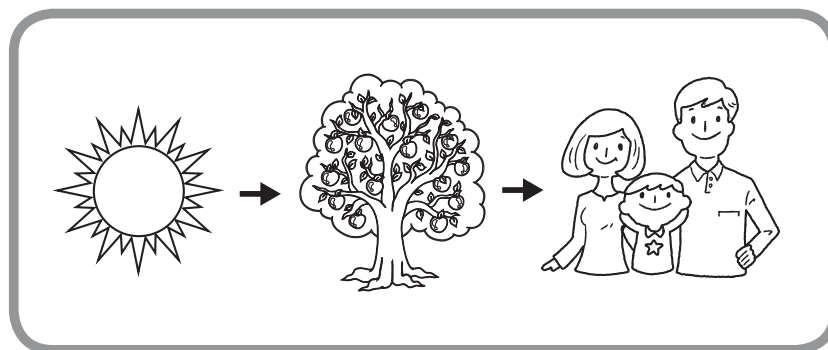
Have your child use the pictures on the back of this letter to describe what a turtle eats. Ask: *What kinds of plants do turtles eat? What kinds of animals do they eat? What kind of pond animal might eat a turtle?*

### Try This at Home: Family Food Chains

With your child, explore some of the foods in your cupboard or refrigerator. For each kind of food, ask: *Where do you think this food came from? Did it come from a plant or an animal?* Explain that the fruits, vegetables, meat, and dairy products from a supermarket are grown or raised on farms, while fish come from lakes, rivers, or the ocean.

For each food that comes from an animal, ask: *What do you think the animal ate?* Explain that cows eat plants such as grasses. Chickens eat grains, but they eat insects, too. Pigs eat all sorts of foods, both plants and animals. Most of the fish we eat feed on other fish.

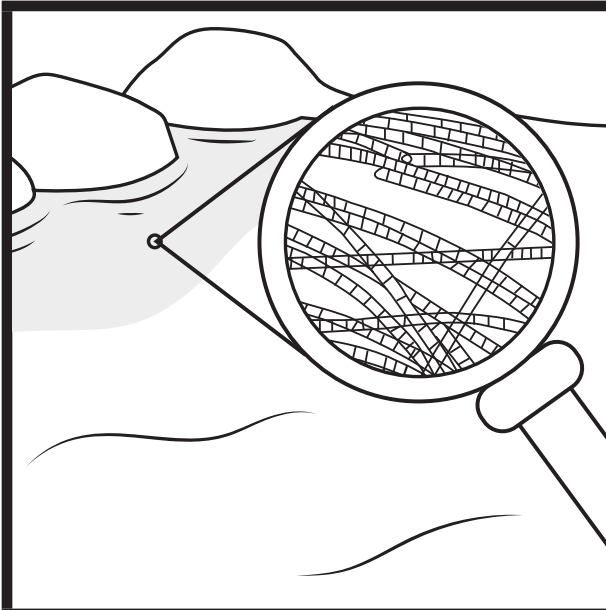
Cut out photographs or draw pictures of some of the foods you found as well as the plant or animal that produced them. Then help your child arrange the pictures in order from the source to your table. Draw arrows to connect them. Here is an example:



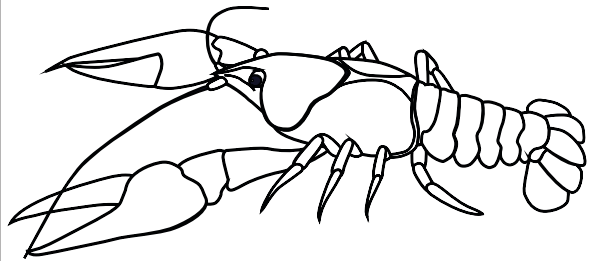
# What Do Turtles Eat?

We learned what turtles eat. (green circles)

We learned what eats turtles. (red circles)



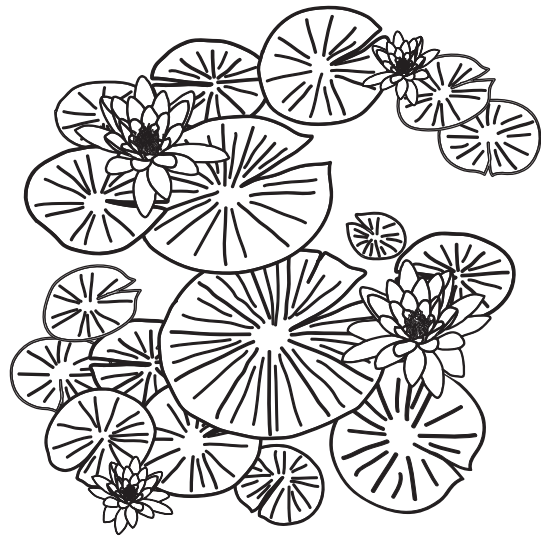
Algae



Crayfish



Heron



Plants (lily pads)

## Dear Family,

Today we did an activity called “Turtle Shell Shapes” from *Ron’s Habitat Adventure*. This activity introduced children to these science and math concepts:

- A turtle’s shell protects the turtle.
- Simple shapes can be combined to make larger shapes.

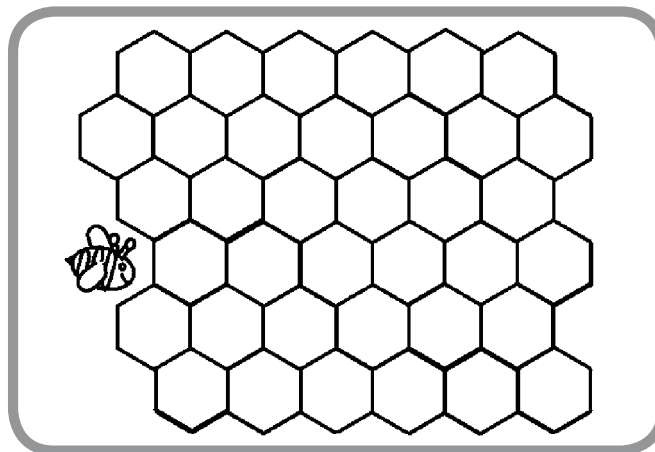
Let your child tell you what happened in the activity. Have your child use the picture of a turtle shell on the back of this letter to help explain. As your child speaks, listen for words that describe shapes, such as **sides** and **corners**.

If your child needs help in telling you about the activity, ask questions such as *Why is a turtle’s shell important to a turtle? What kinds of shapes did you find on a turtle shell?*

### Try This at Home: The Contours of a Cone

Work with your child to identify objects in your home with different shapes. Look for doors, windows, and tables with four sides. Look for tables, cans, and jars that have a circular shape. Can you find any objects that have five sides? Six sides?

Tell your child that bees use wax to make honeycombs to store their honey. The picture shows what a honeycomb looks like. How many sides does each part of the honeycomb have? (6)

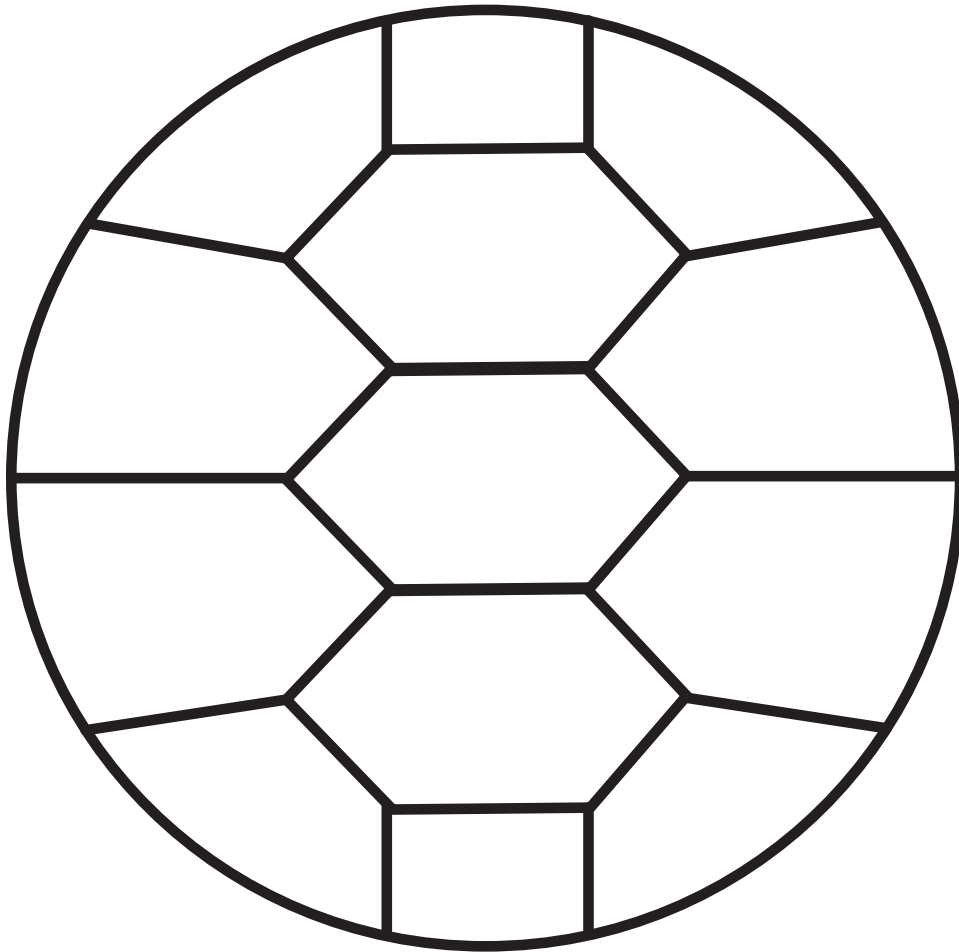


This STEM project has been developed in partnership with Texas A&M University.

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# Turtle Shell Shapes

We found shapes with 4 sides, 5 sides, and 6 sides on a turtle shell.



## Dear Family,

Today we did an activity called “Design Turtle Patches” from *Ron’s Habitat Adventure*. This activity introduced children to these science and engineering concepts:

- Different materials have different properties.
- Engineers test models to see if their plans work.

Let your child tell you what happened in the activity. Have your child use the pictures on the back of the sheet to help explain.

If your child needs help in telling you about the activity, ask questions such as *What was the problem you were trying to solve? What materials did you use to make your patch? How did you attach the patch to the shell? Did your patch stay on the shell when you pulled it through a cloth tube? Did your patch stay on the shell when you put it in water?*

As your child describes the activity, listen for these words **model**, **patch**, **test** and **waterproof**.

### Try This at Home: Bandages for Your Family

Show your child where your family keeps bandages or a first aid kit. Explain why it is important to keep wounds clean.

Have your child examine the different kinds of bandages. What are they made of? How sticky are they? Are any of them waterproof? When would it be important to use a waterproof bandage? Do some of the bandages have special features, such as being clear?

Encourage your child to identify the shapes of the different bandages. Ask questions such as: *How are the shapes of the bandages different? When might you use a small bandage shaped like a circle? When might you use a long bandage?*

# Our Turtle Patch

Our patch:

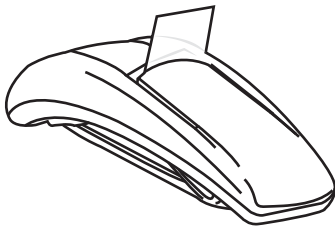
Cloth

Plastic

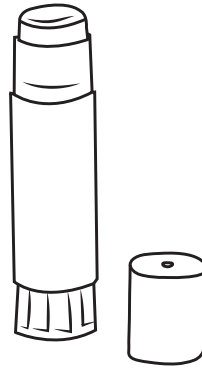
Foil

Wax paper

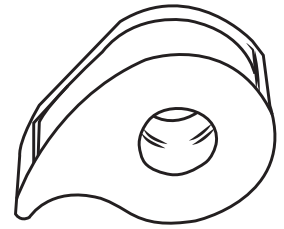
We used:



Clear tape

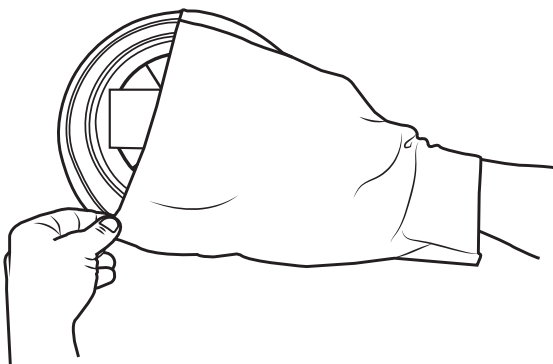


Glue



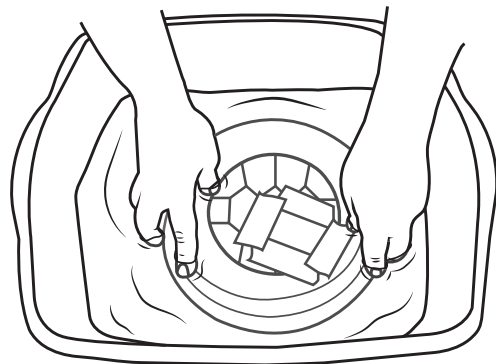
Paper tape

Did the patch stay on the turtle—



in the tube?

Yes    No



in the water?

Yes    No