

ELINOR WONDERS WHY
EWW125B Turtle Crossing
By Katherine Sandford

Elinor's Question: Why does the turtle cross the road?

Logline: Elinor and her friends are having a blast riding on the new bike path in the park, until they keep getting interrupted by turtles crossing the road.

Curriculum Goals; LS5. Begin to understand that animals and plants depend on other living things and nonliving things in the environment to meet some of their needs:

b. Identify the habitats of familiar animals and plants in the environment

c. Recognize that each kind of living things has a habitat that has resources to meet its unique needs (Elinor and her friends observe the turtles' interaction with their environment on land and in the pond)

ES3. Understand that things people do to live comfortably can affect the world around them, but they can make choices that reduce their impacts on the land, water, air, and other living things:

a. Ask questions about and discuss examples of how humans use Earth's resources (including soil and water) to meet their needs

b. Demonstrate an awareness of and the ability to discuss in simple terms the need for conservation, recycling, and respect for the environment

c. Participate in simple activities to care for the environment (Elinor and her friends come to realize their new bike path cuts through the turtles' route to the pond, so they create a detour).

SEP1. Asking questions (science) and defining problems (engineering)

c. Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation

d. Identify a problem that can be solved by the design a new or improved object or tool (engineering) (Elinor and her friends ask questions about the cause of the turtle crossing the road, and the effect of it doing so - and they decide they need to improve the design of the bike path).

SEP3. Planning and carrying out investigations

d. With guidance, plan and conduct simple investigations using simple tools

e. Design and build a solution to a simple problem (engineering) (Elinor and her friends investigate the turtle's habitat, then decide to change the route of the bike path).

SEP4. Analyzing and interpreting data

c. Record observations to describe patterns and/or relationships in the natural and designed world(s) in order to answer scientific questions and solve problems.

d. Talk about and reflect on what happened during an investigation or when solving a problem, and why it might

have happened (The kids observe the behavior of the turtles, then discuss what is happening and why it is occurring)
SEP6. Constructing explanations (science) and Designing Solutions (engineering)

a. Use background knowledge experiences, and data to construct reasonable explanations and theories of natural phenomena (science)

b. Look for and describe patterns and relationships in natural phenomena (science)

c. Use and apply productive science discourse to support an explanation

d. Use evidence to support a theory or solution to a problem (engineering) (The kids observe the behavior of some of the turtles, then extrapolate that all of the turtles will have the same road-crossing problem, and use that evidence to support their idea that the bike path route must change).

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1 **EXT. BIKE PATH (BESIDE TURTLE POND) -- DAY** 1

ELINOR, OLIVE and ARI are having a blast riding along the brand new (dirt) bike-path beside the pond <SFX: EXCITED CHEERS> as Ari narrates like a sports announcer.

1 ARI 1

 (like a sports announcer,
 loud, biking effort)
 WOOO-HOOO!!! Here come the Animal
 Town Racers, zooming around the
 BRAND NEW BIKE PATH!

Ari has a cool big-wheel trike, Elinor has a scooter, and Olive has a brand-new balance bike. They all have nifty bike helmets (of course!) and they all LOVE going fast!

2 ARI (CONT'D) 2

 (announcing, projecting,
 effort)
 Awesome Ari is in the lead, but
 here comes Elinor the Racing Rabbit
 and now they're neck and neck. They
 are both really whipping around the
 big bend, but wait, what's this?
 (OLIVE is gaining on her
 new balance-bike.)
 It's OLIVE THE INCREDIBLE!! Coming
 from behind and taking the lead!

Olive zips by proudly.

3 ELINOR 3

 (panting a little)
 Whoa Olive, you're really good on
 your new balance bike.

4 OLIVE 4

 (panting, proudly)
 Thanks!

5 ARI 5

 (projecting)
 Look at her GOOOOOO!! Now that's
 what I call FAST!

They zip around a turn, Olive in front when she sees something. Her eyes widen.

6 OLIVE 6

 Uh-oh!

<SFX: SCREECH> - she slams on the brakes (her feet) and behind her Elinor and Ari both have to swerve (gently) to avoid collision.

7 ARI 7
Whoa!! What's up, Olive?

8 ELINOR 8
Why did you stop so fast?

Olive points.

9 Look! OLIVE 9

ANGLE ON: a sweet little baby turtle is trundling across the bike-path.

10 ELINOR 10
A baby turtle.

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11                                ARI                                11
    How cool is that?
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The kids rush over and admire the little terrapin as it slowly makes its way across the path. Ari narrates the turtle's progress.

12

ARI (CONT'D)

(like a slow sports
announcer)

And here's the turtle, putting one
foot forwards really slooowly, now
it's stepping with its other foot,
now it's moving it's whooooole
body, and now it's taking a little
break.

(the turtle stops for a
beat, then starts moving
again.)

Hold on, it looks like the turtle
is moving its other foot - no,
wait.

(turtle stops)

Another break. This is going to
take some time.

12

Elinor is encouraging, but Olive is starting to get worried.

13	ELINOR	13
	Come on little turtle, you can do it!	

14 OLIVE 14
Hurry, turtle, you have to get off
the path! What if other bikers
come?
(she looks up the path)
They might hit you.

15 ARI 15
Hmmm. Good point, Olive.

16 ELINOR 16
We'd better guard this turtle.

So the kids take their places as turtle guards (maybe linking
arms and moving comically slowly as the turtle progresses).
They warn MZ. MOLE as she zips by in a pedal-cart with an
awning, or something cool.

17 ELINOR (CONT'D) 17
Oh, here comes Mz. Mole. Careful,
Mz. Mole, turtle crossing.

Mz. Mole slows down and carefully drives around the turtle
and the kids, who move aside to let her pass, smiling and
waving as she rides off. Next comes KOA on his skateboard.

18 OLIVE 18
Go slow, please, Koa. Turtle on the
road.

Koa slowly and adroitly skates around. Ari looks over at the
turtle. ANGLE ON: It has reached the other side of the path.

19 ARI 19
(announcer)
Annnd it looks like, YES! The
turtle has done it! It's crossed
the path!

The turtle makes its way into the long bulrushes on the other
side (we hear a small SPLASH, but the kids don't notice).

20 ELINOR 20
YAY!

21 ARI 21
See you later, turtle friend.

22 OLIVE 22
Now that the turtle is safe...
RACE YA!!!

The kids jump on their vehicles and zoom off.

2 **EXT. BIKE PATH (AROUND THE LOOP) -- DAY** 2

The kids are happily racing again.

23 ARI 23

(announcer)

And here's Elinor the Racing
Rabbit, scooting towards the big
bend again, with Awesome Ari on his
trike right beside but - here comes
Olive the Incredible once again!

Olive grins as she takes her place in the lead.

24 OLIVE 24

(giggling)

I can't help it. I just LOVE going
fast!

She <SFX: TRUMPETS> her trunk.

25 ARI 25

(announcer)

Olive the Incredible is in the lead
with the need for speed! WHOO-HOO!

26 ELINOR 26

Go, OLIVE!

AERIAL VIEW - shows the kids zipping around the loop and
having a great time. Although they weave in and out, Olive
is usually in the lead. From this vantage point we can
clearly see the shape of the trail -- a loop BESIDE the pond:
(DESIGN NOTE: there should be a little grassy area on the
other side of the road from the pond, where we will find the
turtle nest).

DIRECTOR'S NOTE: This can be a direct down shot so we see
helmets and the tops of their bikes. Not 3/4 down shot as
animating them on bikes as they go around in a circle will be
a real challenge from this perspective.

3 **EXT. BIKE PATH (NEAR TURTLE POND) - MINUTES LATER** 3

The kids end up at the same place.

27 OLIVE 27

Wha-oh!

Olive stops in a cloud of dust with Elinor and Ari close
behind.

28	ELINOR	28
	There's the turtle again.	
ANGLE ON: Another little turtle is crossing the bike path sooo slowly (and headed in the same direction).		
29	OLIVE	29
	The turtle is back AGAIN?	
30	ARI	30
	How can that be?	
31	ELINOR	31
	C'mon, let's guard it again.	
The kids get off their vehicles and resume their guarding positions until the turtle makes it across.		
32	ELINOR (CONT'D)	32
	Why does this turtle keep crossing the road?	
33	OLIVE	33
	(making a joke)	
	Uhhh, to get to the other side.	
34	ELINOR	34
	(giggling)	
	Yeah, but why? And it's going in the same direction - from here - to there.	
35	ARI	35
	Maybe it forgot its lunch at home and had to go back. I do that aaalllll the time.	
36	OLIVE	36
	Or maybe it just likes crossing roads?	
At this moment MARY and LIZ pedal by on a bicycle-built-for- two.		
37	ARI	37
	Excuse me, turtle crossing.	
They go around.		
38	OLIVE	38
	We can't guard the turtle all day. What if it decides to cross when we're not here? We have to figure this out.	

39 ELINOR 39
We need MORE observations. Follow
that turtle.

The kids follow the turtle through the long grass and
bulrushes at the side of the path to...

4 **EXT. POND -- DAY** 4

The kids part the bulrushes and reveal <SFX: Wooooow>.

ANGLE ON: A magical little hidden cove, and lazing in the
shallow water are two little turtles and one big momma.

40 ELINOR 40
Wait a minute - it's not just ONE
turtle.

41 OLIVE 41
It's one, two little turtles.

42 ARI 42
And a big turtle too, look.

Ari points, ANGLE ON: The big turtle.

43 ELINOR 43
So it wasn't the same turtle
crossing the road.

44 OLIVE 44
It was a different turtle each
time.

45 ARI 45
I guess they were coming to float
in the pond.

46 OLIVE 46
Yeah, but what were they doing on
the other side of the road in the
first place?

47 ELINOR 47
Let's go and check it out. We need
even MORE observations.

5 **EXT. BIKE PATH - DAY** 5

The kids cross the path and enter the grassy spot on the
other side.

6	EXT. TURTLE NEST - DAY	6
	The kids' faces light up as they find their answer <SFX: GASP>.	
	ANGLE ON: a nest with three more baby turtles and five broken eggshells.	
48	OLIVE More little turtles!	48
49	ELINOR And broken eggshells. What are they doing here?	49
50	ARI Maybe the turtles were playing with some chickens.	50
51	OLIVE Hmmm. Good idea, but I don't see any chickens, Ari.	51
52	ELINOR Maybe the little turtles came OUT of the eggs?	52
53	OLIVE Oh yeah, I read about this in my Nature Book. Turtles hatch from eggs, just like baby birds.	53
54	ARI Ohhhhhh.	54
	ANGLE ON: One of the baby turtles rouses itself and makes its way out of the nest.	
55	ARI (CONT'D) Uh-oh, this little one is on the move.	55
56	OLIVE It's heading towards the bike path.	56
57	ELINOR Wait a minute... (observing the eggshells and putting it together) That's why the little turtles were crossing. They hatched here on THIS side of the path...	57
	She points down.	

58 OLIVE 58
But now they want to get to the
pond on the other side.

She points to the other side.

59 ARI 59
That makes sense...
(noticing turtle)
And there it goes.

The baby turtle makes its way to the bike path.

7 **EXT. BIKE PATH -- DAY** 7

As Elinor and Ari guard this latest little travelling turtle,
Olive makes notes in her book.

60 OLIVE 60
Okay, now we know the problem.
Look!

ANGLE ON: Olive's notebook, she'd made a little drawing of
the pond with the bike path beside it, the nest on the other
side and a turtle on the path (maybe an arrow to show
direction?).

61 OLIVE (CONT'D) 61
The new bike path goes right
through where the turtles walk to
get from the nest to the pond.

62 ELINOR 62
That's not fair, the turtles were
here first.

63 OLIVE 63
You're right, Elinor.

64 ARI 64
We should do something.

At that moment Ranger Rabbit shows up.

65 RANGER RABBIT 65
Well if it isn't the Animal Town
racers - how is the new bike path?

66 ELINOR 66
Not good Mom.

67 OLIVE 67
We keep getting stopped.

68	ARI	68
	By TURTLES!	
69	RANGER RABBIT	69
	Turtles?	
70	ELINOR	70
	Yes, see.	
She parts the bushes beside the trail, Mom takes a look.		
ANGLE ON: The turtle nest.		
71	RANGER RABBIT	71
	Oooh, I do see. A Momma turtle made her nest in this dry sandy spot... turtles do that.	
72	OLIVE	72
	And then she laid EGGS.	
73	ARI	73
	And when the babies came out of the eggs, they headed straight for the pond.	
74	ELINOR	74
	Right across the new bike path.	
75	RANGER RABBIT	75
	Oh, dear.	
76	OLIVE	76
	See?	
Olive shows her drawing to Ranger Rabbit.		
77	RANGER RABBIT	77
	(impressed) This is very helpful, Olive. (to all three) It's my job to take care of all the animals in the Park, but I didn't realize the bike path put the turtles in danger. Hmmm, let's try to solve the problem together. What do you think we should do?	
The kids all think, then...		
78	ARI	78
	I've got it! Parachutes!!	

THOUGHT BUBBLE: Show turtles in parachutes landing safely in the pond.

79 OLIVE 79
Uh, but how do we get the turtles
up into the sky in the first place?

80 ARI 80
A turtle launcher?

THOUGHT BUBBLE: Shows the "Turtle Launcher". It can just be a "teeter-totter" type deal, or something more elaborate (Designers have fun!) A turtle steps into place wearing a helmet and a parachute and is launched.

81 RANGER RABBIT 81
I'm not sure that's safer, Ari.
Even with parachutes.

The turtle lands in a tree.

82 ARI 82
I guess you're right.

THOUGHT BUBBLE BURSTS:

83 OLIVE 83
You know there's really only one
fair thing to do.

84 ELINOR 84
What's that?

85 OLIVE 85
Like you said, Elinor, the turtles
were here first.

86 ELINOR 86
Right! And the babies have to make
it to the pond safely.
(putting it together)
Soooo, we need to move the bike
path.

87 OLIVE 87
You mean, like this?

ANGLE ON: Olive sketches a detour on her map.

88 ELINOR 88
Yes, can we do it Mom?

89 RANGER RABBIT 89
I think so, let me talk with Mrs.
Beaver.

QUICK CROSSFADE TO:

8 **EXT. BIKE PATH (NEAR TURTLE POND) -- A LITTLE LATER** 8

Mrs. Beaver and her crew are ready to get to work.

90 RANGER RABBIT 90
Well, what do you think? Can we
move the path?

91 MRS. BEAVER 91
We HAVE to move the path, Ranger
Rabbit. For the turtles' safety.
(calling)
All right, crew! Let's get to
WORK!

9 **EXT. BIKE PATH REROUTING MONTAGE** 9

The kids sing as they help Ranger Rabbit, Mrs. Beaver and her crew move the path, clearing the new route (maybe just marking out and filling in a dirt bath with sand and rocks if you don't want them have them removing foliage/trees/bushes) and protecting the turtle crossing with rocks across the old bike path.

92 ELINOR, ARI, OLIVE 92
ALL: Take care, take care
When you're out in nature
Remember to share
Take care, take care
Think of the animals
Already there.
Take care!

ELINOR: Out in the forest
Watch where you go
OLIVE: The birds and trees,
And frogs down below
ARI: They all need their homes
To be happy and safe
ELINOR: If you pay attention
It'll work out great

ALL: Take care, take care
Think of the animals
Already there
When you're out in nature,
(MORE)

ELINOR, ARI, OLIVE (CONT'D)

Take care, take care.
Remember to share.
Take care!

10 **EXT. NEW BIKE PATH - LATER** 10

ANGLE ON: Olive's design in her notebook. CROSSFADE TO:
AERIAL VIEW: they've detoured the bike path around the turtle nest.

ANGLE ON: Elinor, Ari, Ranger Rabbit and Mrs. Beaver are admiring their handiwork (Elinor is holding Olive's design).

93 RANGER RABBIT 93

Nice job everyone. Now the turtles
will be safe because everyone will
ride AROUND them.

94 MRS. BEAVER 94

And we couldn't have done it
without you kids.

95 ELINOR 95

No problem, Mrs. Beaver.

96 ARI 96

We love to help out. It's what we
do.

97 ELINOR 97

Hey, where's Olive?

98 OLIVE 98

(calling)
Over here!

Ari and Elinor rush to see what Olive's doing.

ANGLE ON: She is putting the finishing touches on the handmade "Turtle Crossing" sign she's drawn.

99 ELINOR 99

Whoa, great turtle drawing.

100 OLIVE 100

It's a turtle crossing sign so
everyone will know that there are
turtles around here.

She attaches her drawing to a stick and sticks it into the ground.

101 RANGER RABBIT 101
Very nice, Olive. Now everyone will
be careful even if they're not on
the bike path.

102 MRS. BEAVER 102
And the turtles can go as slowly as
they want.

At this moment, right on cue, the second-last little turtle
struggles out of the grass and begins his long, slow trek.

103 OLIVE 103
Awww, it's so cute.

104 ELINOR 104
Take as long as you like, little
one.

105 ARI 105
(slow announcer)
Annnnd, here's the little turtle,
on its way to the pond. It puts
out one foot, then moooves its
whole body, then is it going to
take another step? Uhm, not
sure... but we know how this is
going to go, folks - sloooooowly.

A beat.

106 OLIVE 106
Yep, that turtle sure does go slow.

Another beat.

107 ELINOR 107
REALLY slow.

Olive smiles at her friends.

108 OLIVE 108
Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

CU: On Elinor who smiles, she gets it.

109 ELINOR 109
Yeah, while the turtle is going
slow, we can go...

WIDEN TO REVEAL: The kids are now on their vehicles.

110 ELINOR (CONT'D) 110
...FAST!

They blast off down the bike path, enjoying their speed.

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111                                ARI                                111
                                (fast announcer)
                                And here are the Animal Town
                                Racers, blasting around their NEW
                                BIKE PATH, away from the turtles
                                who like to go slow - not like our
                                Racers -- WHOO-HOOOO!
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IRIS OUT, THE END