ELINOR WONDERS WHY
EWW149 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 us that evidence to support their idea that the bike path route must change).

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FIRST DRAFT - September 12, 2019
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POLISH: November 7, 2019

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 OLIVE 9
Look!

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

10 ELINOR 10
A baby turtle! *

11 ARI 11
How cool is that?

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) 12
(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 whoooooole
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.

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 aaallll 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 48
More little turtles!

49 ELINOR 49
And broken eggshells. What are they doing here? * *

50 ARI 50
Maybe the turtles were playing with some chickens. * *

51 OLIVE 51
Hmmm. Good idea, but I don't see any chickens, Ari. * *

52 ELINOR 52
Maybe the little turtles came OUT of the eggs?

53 OLIVE 53
Oh yeah, I read about this in my Nature Book. Turtles hatch from eggs, just like baby birds. * * *

54 ARI 54 * *
Ohhhhhh.

ANGLE ON: One of the baby turtles rouses itself and makes its way out of the nest.

55 ARI (CONT'D) 55
Uh-oh, this little one is on the move.

56 OLIVE 56 * *
It's heading towards the bike path.

57 ELINOR 57
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... * * *

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 sake of the
turtles.
(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.

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

ALL: Take care, take care
Think of the animals
Already there
(MORE)

ELINOR, ARI, OLIVE (CONT'D)
Take care, take care
When you're out in nature
Remember to share.

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 mooooves its whole body, then is it going to take another step? Uhm, not sure... but we know how this is going to go, folks - slooooooowly. * *

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.

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!

IRIS OUT, THE END