

# Hatching a Plot

## Objective

Students will use a graph to plot the movements of two sea turtles at sea.

## Materials

- graph paper
- pencils
- two containers

## Background

By fitting sea turtles with satellite tracking devices, scientists at HSWRI (Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute) and SeaWorld have sought to gain a greater understanding of turtle navigation and biology in the face of threats to the species from fishing, pollution, and habitat destruction.

## Action

1. Write the letters A to Z and the numbers 1 to 35 on a piece of paper. Photocopy it once and cut the letters and numbers into individual slips of paper. Fold the slips and place the letter slips in one container and the number slips in the other container. Add five blank slips of paper to each container.
2. Have students write the letters of the alphabet along the bottom of their graph paper, one letter to each square. Ask them to number the squares down the left edge.
3. Each day, have student's pick two slips of paper out of each container. These are their turtles' locations for that day.
4. Students plot locations on their graph and date the mark. They should decide before they glance at the paper which turtle that slip will represent. Each turtle should be represented on the graph by a different symbol of the student's choice.
5. If the student picks a blank piece of paper, that indicates their turtle has broken radio contact and they should record that on their graph.
6. Choose two responsible students to collect the slips of paper and make sure they are returned to the correct container for use the next day.
7. Continue the activity for one to two weeks. Tell students that each square on the graph equals ten miles. How many total miles did their turtle travel? Ask students to write up a one paragraph "report" of their turtles' status and movements. Did their turtle move around a lot? Did any pattern emerge?