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# Monkeying Around WITH ART 

The artist who created this work calls it The Troop. The Troop is not just an artwork. It is also an example of a mathematical idea called a tessellation. A tessellation is made by repeating a pattern to completely fill a plane with no gaps or overlapping parts. Study The Troop to make sure that it has no gaps or overlapping parts. Tile work is an example of a common tessellation because all the parts fit together.

The Troop was based on the work of M.C. Escher (1898-1972). Like The Troop, many of Escher's artworks had parts that fit together cleverly. He made other artworks that distorted, or changed, space.

## Try these activities:

Color The Troop by following these directions.

1. Color all the right-side-up monkeys brown.
2. Color the upside-down monkeys blue.
3. Color the monkeys turned to the left yellow.
4. Color all the monkeys turned to the right red.

Challenge: Color the incomplete drawings of monkeys around the edge of the picture, using the correct color.

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## Make an Escher-like Tessellation

## Follow these instructions:

1. Cut several 3-inch squares of paper.

## You will need:

2. Use one of the squares to make a practice tessellation. Cut a triangle into the side of one of the squares (see Sketch A). Slide the cutout triangle across
paper, scissors,
tape, a pencil the remaining part of the square. Tape the triangle to the side opposite from where it was cut (see Sketch B).
3. Now cut a wavy shape from the top of the original square (see Sketch C). Slide this shape down the remaining part of the square. Tape the wavy shape to the bottom of the square, which is opposite from where the shape was cut (see Sketch D).
4. You now have a shape that you can trace around (see Sketch D). Practice tracing several shapes that fit into each other (see Sketch E). Notice how the parts fit together. You have made a tessellation.

5. Now think about the shapes that you want to create in your own tessellation. Follow steps 1-4 to create your own tessellation. After you have filled a page with tracings of your shape, use felt pen to add color and details.


Create interesting sculptures of monkeys. All you need are some pipe cleaners and your imagination.


1. Twist the ends of two pipe cleaners together. Bend the pair into this shape to make the legs. Curl the ends to make hooked feet.

2. Attach the arms at the top of the body and the legs at the bottom.

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You can create an environment for your pipe cleaner monkeys to live in when they are not hanging around your house. Use a cardboard box with a lid.

1. Cut a peephole in one end of your box for looking at the diorama. Also, cut a hole in the top of the box to let light in.
2. Think about the kind of environment you want your monkeys to live in. Will it be a rain forest? Will it be a woodland or a grassland? Or will it have a hot spring like snow monkeys in Japan have? Will the environment be safe for the monkeys? Or will you include some kind of danger, such as trees being cut down or a predator that might attack?
3. Collect the things you will need to make the environment the way you want it. You might use clay, paint, real or plastic plants, rocks, paper, cloth, ribbons, cotton balls, used wrapping paper, and other found objects. Use paste, staples, and bits of clay to attach all the parts inside the box.
4. When you are finished, look through the peephole. Is everything where you want it to be? Did you decorate the lid of the box? Are there things for your monkeys to hang from? When you like the way your box looks, let your monkeys enjoy their new home.


Invite your child to make several monkey masks with you to show different monkey faces. If you host a luncheon for your child's friends, each guest can make a different mask. Then, the children can act out monkey behaviors described in this Ranger Rick Zoobooks issue. Follow these steps:
A. Have your child choose one monkey face for each mask you will make together. Help your child make a quick sketch for each mask. Focus on the shapes of each monkey's eyes, nose, mouth, head, and ears.
B. Then, have your child choose the colors of construction paper that he or she will use for each mask. Have him or her cut out the construction paper to match the shapes of the monkeys' features you discussed and sketched in step A.
C. Have your child glue the parts for each mask to a separate paper plate. Help your child position and cut the eye holes for each mask. Warning: Do not let your child wear the mask while cutting the eye holes. Finally, help your child tie string to the masks to help hold them in place.

