



MAKE YOUR OWN **ALLIGATOR**

Educational Activity

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Ocean Literacy Standards:

#5: *The ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems.*

Alligators keep the food web in balance. They also create deep holes of water that provide freshwater for many different coastal animals during times of drought. This activity teaches students how to use recycled materials to create their own alligator! Along the way, they will learn to identify different parts of an alligator as well as fun facts about their unique adaptations.

CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

- Alligator anatomy
- Adaptations
- Fine motor skills



Marine Extension and
Georgia Sea Grant
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Use [this timelapse video](#) as a resource for creating your own alligator!

Materials Needed:

- Paper towel roll
- Toilet paper roll
- Scissors
- Glue
- Green, white and black crayons
- Googly eyes

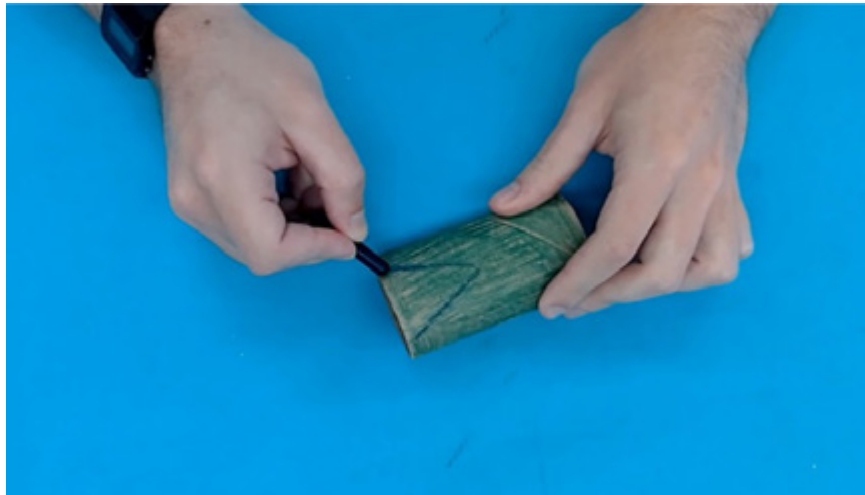


Step 1: Color the toilet paper and paper towel rolls green. The paper towel roll will become the body and the toilet paper roll will become the head.

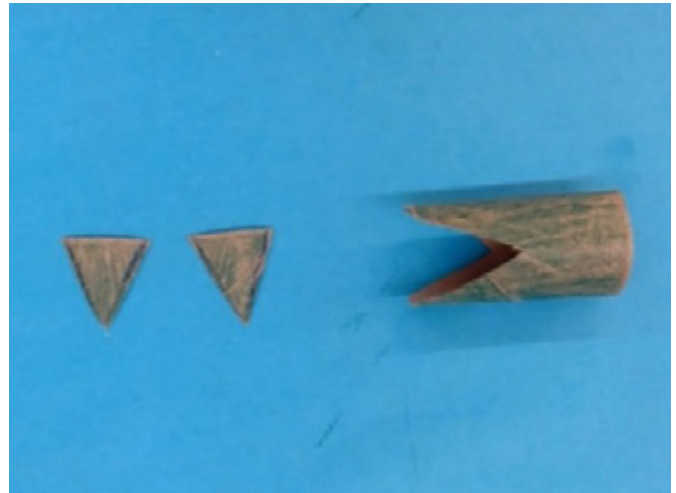


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Step 2: Draw an outline for the mouth (v-shape) on both sides of the the toilet paper roll with the black crayon. Alligators use their mouth to capture prey and have the third strongest bite force in all of the animal kingdom!

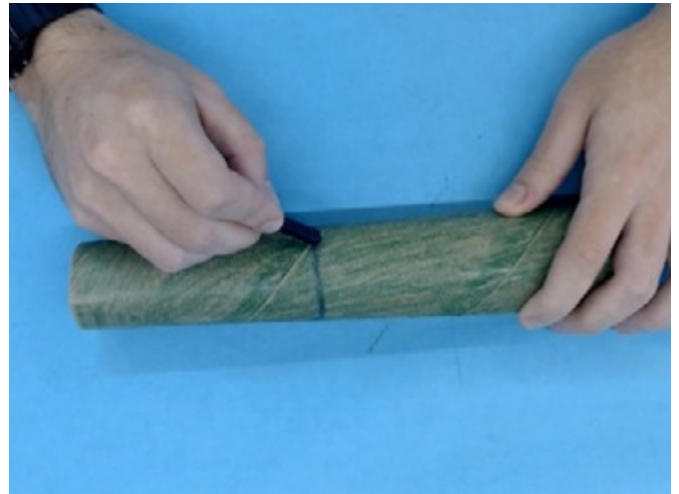


Step 3: Cut out the outlines for the mouth and keep the leftover cardboard for later.



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Step 4: Use the black crayon to outline the tail (long v-shape) on the paper towel roll. An alligator's tail is about half its body length and they use it to propel them through and out of the water at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour.



Step 5: Cut out the outline of the tail and save the extra cardboard.

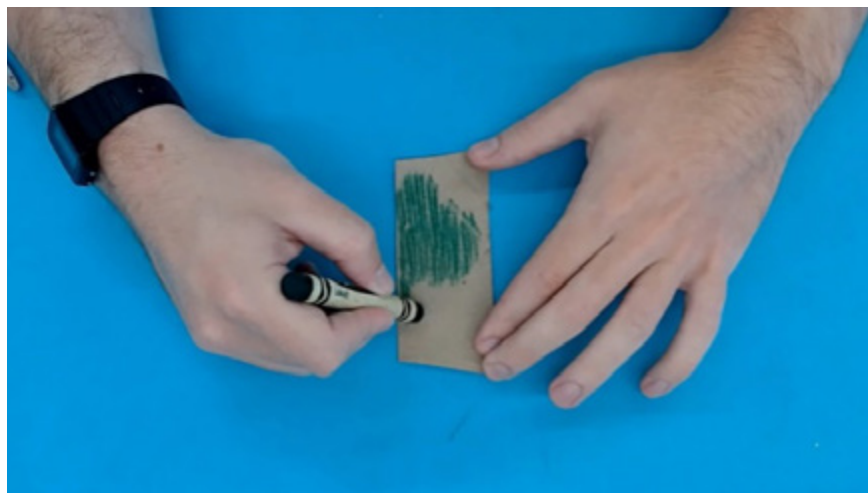


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Step 6: Use the excess cardboard from the body to make four legs of equal length. Save the extra cardboard. Alligators only use their legs for walking on land, not for swimming. Alligators swim by moving their tail.

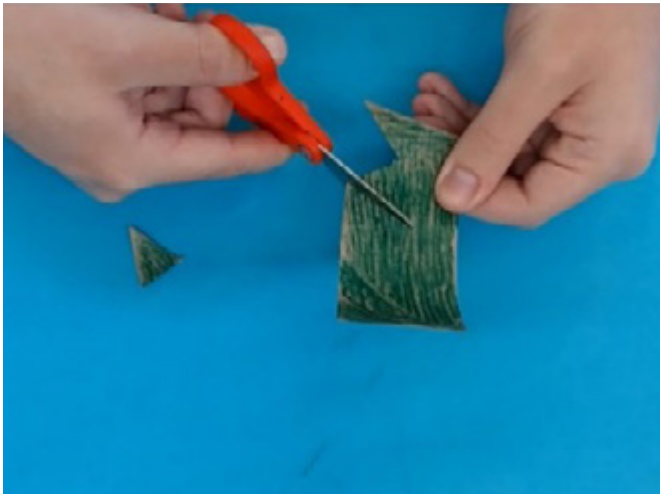


Step 7: Use the green crayon to color the other side of the excess cardboard left over from making the legs.

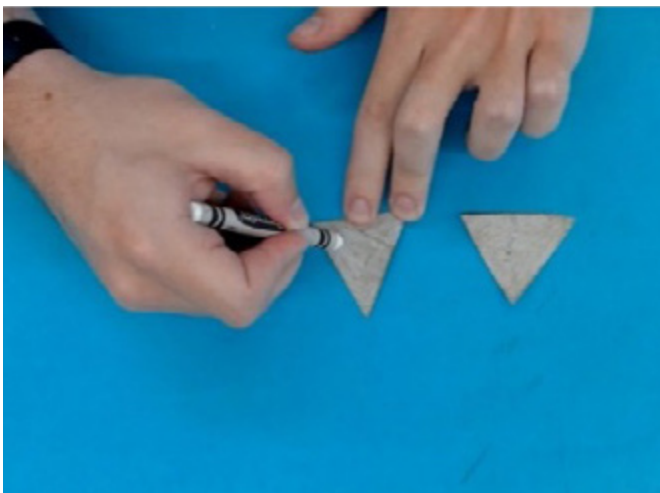


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Step 8: Cutout large triangles from the extra cardboard from Step 7. These triangles will be the alligator's **osteoderms**. These are bony plates that line the alligators back, acting like armor. Set the osteoderms aside.

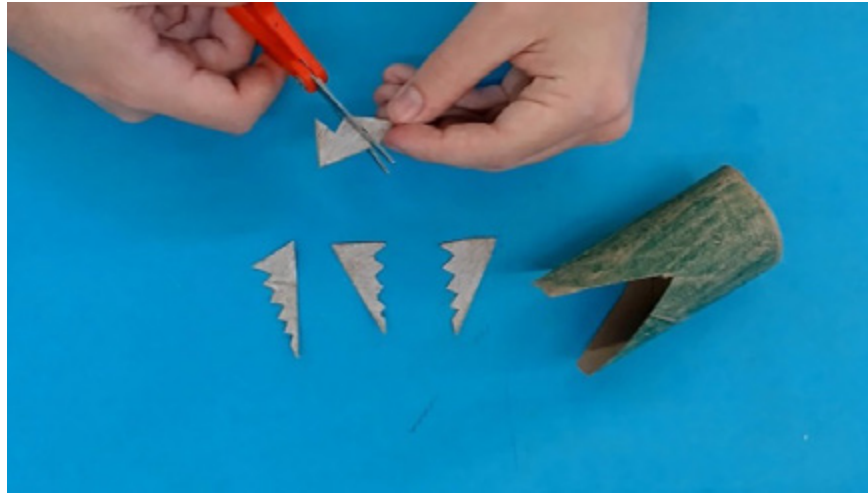


Step 9: Take the excess cardboard from the mouth and color the other side white. Cut the two pieces in half.

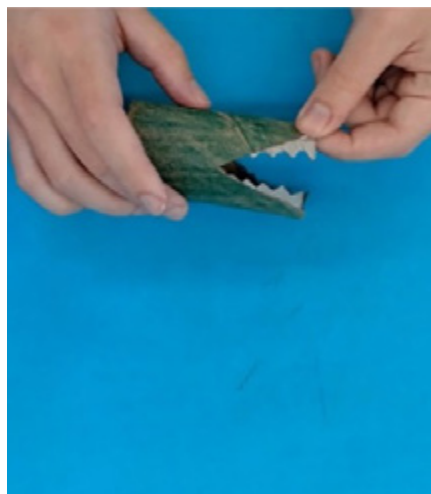


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Step 10: Cut out a triangle pattern on each of the pieces to make the teeth. Alligators are constantly losing and growing new teeth and can go through up to 3,000 in one lifetime!

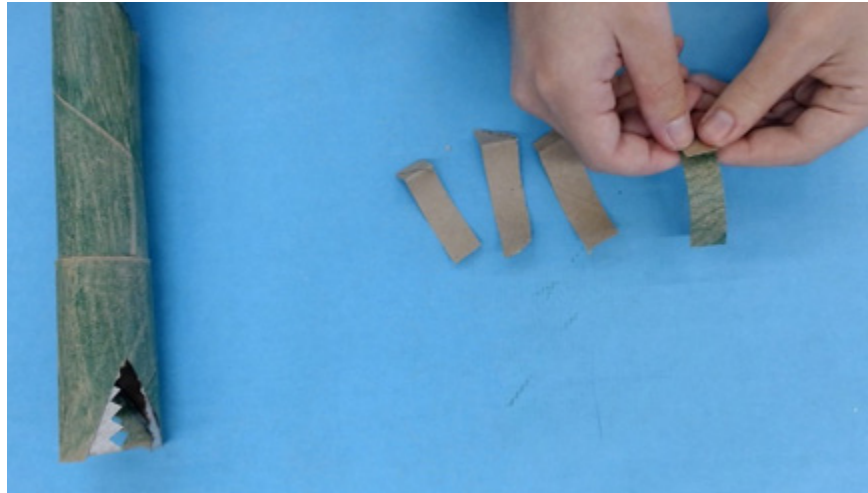


Step 11: Glue the teeth to the mouth and fit the head onto the body.

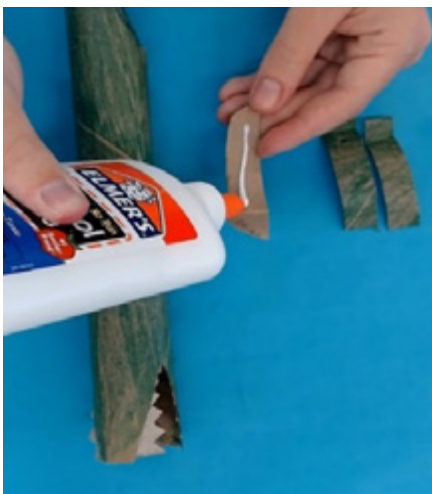


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Step 12: Take the legs and fold the ends to make the feet. Like most aquatic animals, alligators have webbed feet that help them maneuver in the water!

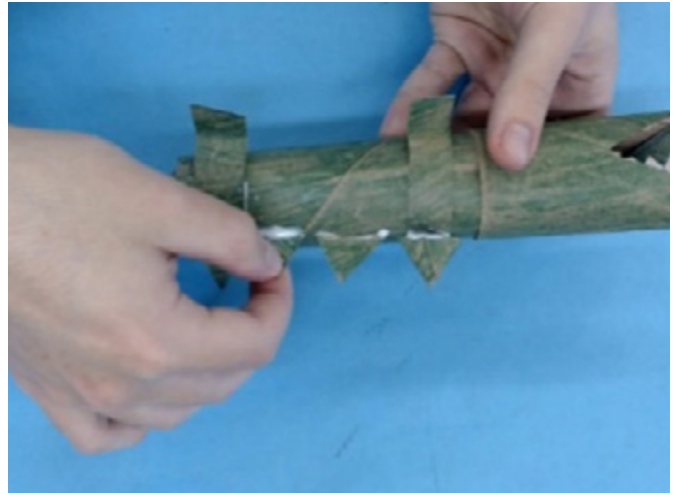


Step 13: Glue the legs to the back.

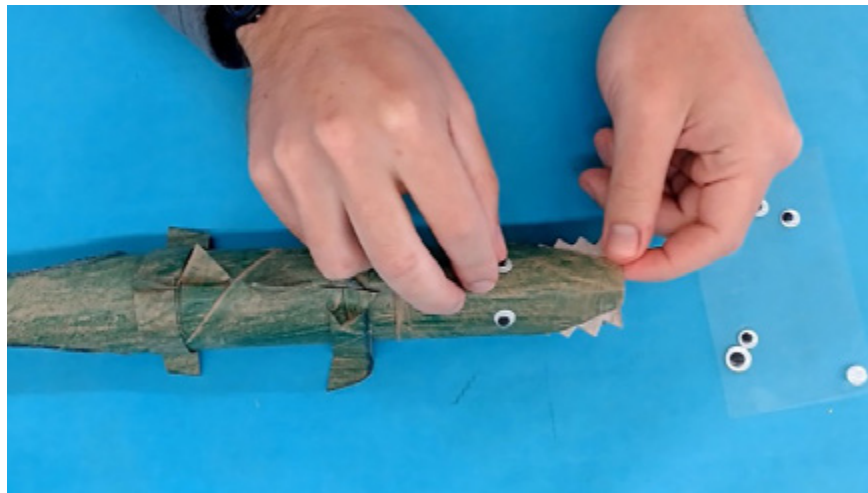


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Step 14: Glue the osteoderms (spikes) to the back.



Step 15: Attach the eyes. Alligator eyes have a third eyelid called a nictitating membrane that functions as a built-in pair of goggles! Their eyes are also on the very top of their head, allowing them to peak out of the water while hiding the rest of their body.



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Step 16: It's done! Now you have your own alligator to take home. Be sure to give your alligator a cool name.

